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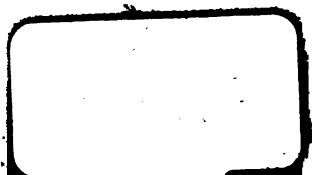
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JAMES AND PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE.

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JAMES AND PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE

BY
sir William James T. ASHLEY, B.A.

LATE SCHOLAR OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD

BEING THE LOTHIAN PRIZE ESSAY FOR 1882

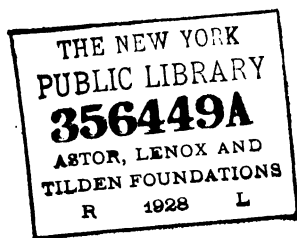
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PREFACE.

AN attempt has been made in this essay to consider the history of the Arteveldes in its relation to the general development of the Flemish towns. It lays but little claim to originality: Lettenhove (*Histoire de Flandre*, 1847-50, *Jacques d'Artevelde*, 1863) has been relied upon for most of the "facts;" most of the ideas have been suggested by Vanderkindere (*Le Siècle des Artevelde*, 1879). But the narrative of Lettenhove has been constructed from sources of most widely differing degrees of value; it has therefore been necessary to have frequent recourse to the original authorities, and to select from among his statements those which seem to be based on the best evidence. It is to Vanderkindere that the thanks of all students of the subject are chiefly due. He is perhaps the first Belgian writer who has risen above the rank of a provincial chronicler, and who has approached the Artevelde episode with a knowledge of what has been done elsewhere in the examination of town history. Aided by Maurer and the documents in Warnkoenig (*Histoire de Flandre*, trans. Gheldorf), it has seemed possible to trace the earlier history of the

towns, especially of Ghent, so as to bring out more clearly the state of affairs in the early part of the fourteenth century. But much has yet to be done before we can quite understand the growth of municipal life, and it must be confessed that the explanations given in this essay of the origin of the magistracy and of the craft-guilds are somewhat too neat and simple to be satisfactory.

The earlier Belgian writers on the Artevelde have now little more than a bibliographical value. Besides the books above mentioned the following have been most helpful:—

CONTEMPORARY.—Froissart, ed. Lettenhove, 1870; ed. Luce for Soc. Hist. France. *Annales fratris minoris Gandavensis, Chronicon Comitum Flandrensium, and Chron. Ægidii li Muisis*, in the *Corpus Chronicorum Flandriae* (or *Recueil des Chroniques de Flandre*), ed. Smet, 1837. Jehan le Bel, ed. Polain, 1863.

MODERN.—Lenz's articles in the *Nouvelles Archives Historiques*, 1837. Moke, in *Revue Nationale IV*. Gilliodts' notes in *Archives de Bruges*, especially vol. iv. 1878. Pauw, *Conspiration d'Audenarde*. Vanderkindere, *Notice sur l'Origine des Magistrats Communaux*, 1874.

I have to thank Mr. J. Wells, Fellow of Wadham College, for his kindness in looking over proofs.

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JAMES AND PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE.

I.

PREVIOUS HISTORY OF FLANDERS.

THE fourteenth century has been variously judged. While some have thought it the golden age of chivalry, and some a time of resultless carnage, it has appeared to others the central epoch of modern history, the close of the feudal ages and the commencement of the industrial period. Any attempt to characterise the century may be deferred till after the examination of that part of it which now more immediately concerns us. But it is clear that the history of Flanders offers exceptional means of arriving at a due estimate. Before the rise of scientific conceptions of the past, when all the centuries between the fall of the Roman

The
Four-
teenth
Century.

marked by
I. the
Anglo-
French
War ;
II. the
growth of
royal
power ;
III. the
rise of the
System of
Estates ;
IV. the
victory of
the Trade
Guilds.

Empire and the invention of printing were indiscriminately included under the term "the dark ages," men were wont to regard the great war between England and France as the especial feature of that time. With the more recent growth of critical inquiry, attention ~~has~~ been directed to the incorporation of the great fiefs in the royal demesne, and the formation of centralised monarchies. The great wave of constitutionalism which has passed over Europe has led to a consideration of the part played by the Third Estate. And, lastly, an increased sense of the dangers attending the modern industrial system, contemporaneous as the growth of that feeling has been with a deeper research into the development of institutions, has begun to turn men's minds to the social arrangements of the mediæval world, and to that banding together of men for mutual help which is known as "the guild system." In all these aspects the fourteenth century may with advantage be studied in Flanders. Bound to France by feudal ties, to England by economic necessities, it was inevitably involved in the war between these two powers. Far the larger part of it was a county of France, and it

was the constant policy of its suzerain, aided in Flanders itself by a party of French sympathies, to strengthen his hold upon it; while the struggle for independence was embittered by a difference in language and traditions. Nowhere, save in Italy, had the towns acquired so great importance and strength: they naturally strove, not only to gain a larger measure of autonomy, but also to obtain a preponderating influence in the administration of the county. Finally, through all the political changes of the period, the social struggle was going on between the burgher oligarchy and the artisans; without some knowledge of this, many events seem inexplicable. It is the intermingling of all these threads which constitutes the interest of the age of the Artevelde.

Consequent interest of Flemish history in the time of the Artevelde as combining all these.

"Flanders is a small piece of land," says the president Wielant, "partly county and partly lordship, so that the Count is styled 'Comes et Dominus Flandriae.'" ¹ For the political state of the country in the later middle ages, no better authority can be found than this jurist, who lived during the latter part of the fifteenth century and held high

¹ *Corpus Chronicorum Flandriae*, I. xxxix.

Its
relation to
France
and the
Empire.

office in the Grand Council of Mechlin. It will be well to follow his example, and describe the different relations in which the parts of the country stood to the two great powers of the Continent, so as to start with clear ideas as to what "Flanders" means. The land bearing that name consisted of two unequal parts, the *lordship* and the *county*. The *lordship* was an imperial fief, "so that its lord was a Prince of the Holy Roman Empire." To it belonged (i.) the county of Alost, *tlant van Aalst*, the district between the Scheldt and the Dender, stretching almost as far south as Audenarde; (ii.) the territory of Waes, *tlant van Waes*, the easternmost corner of Flemish ground; and (iii.) the Quatre-Métiers, *de Vier Ambachten*, the country along the western estuary of the Scheldt; together with some smaller districts. All these were of purely Teutonic blood and speech.

I. The
lordship,
"Flandre
Impéri-
ale."

II. The
county,
"Flandre
Sous la
Coronne."

Far more important was the *county*, which was three times as great as the lordship in extent, and included all the large towns; this, it need scarcely be said, was a fief of France, "so that its prince was one of the twelve peers, and the first of the Counts." But, unlike the lordship, its population was not

homogeneous. The bulk of the inhabitants were Teutonic in language and traditions, being indeed mainly of Salian Frank origin :¹ the country occupied by them, Flemish Flanders, "Flandre Flamingant," consisted of the châtellemies of Ghent, Audenarde, Courtray, Ypres, Bailleul, Cassel, Bergues, Furnes, and the Franc—originally the châtellemie—of Bruges. But the district south of Menin and the Lys was Walloon-speaking: this, "Flandre Gallicant," consisted of the châtellemies of Lille, Douai, and Orchies. Both these distinctions, between the lordship and the county, and, in the latter, between Flandre Flamingant and Gallicant, are of the utmost importance for our history.

(a)
"Flandre
Flamin-
gant."

(β)
"Flandre
Gallicant."

The mediæval history of Flanders is that of a German people bound almost, it might seem, by accident to a Romance nation, yet ever struggling for free and self-controlled development. Those who have so long shared a national life that they cannot realise what is meant by its absence, are apt to estimate the value of the cry of nationality by the number of people who raise it. But the feeling which occasions it is the same in all

The
sentiment
of
nation-
ality.

¹ Vanderkindere, *Le Siècle des Artevelde*, 8-10.

Origin of
the
connection
with
France.

peoples, small and great. Unconnected, save by philosophers, with ideas of utility, the sentiment of repulsion from an alien people to whom one is subject, and of attraction to a kindred people who share that subjection, can neither be estimated nor analysed. Of this sense of separate being, race and language are the two most important causes. But, as we have seen, the vast majority of the Count's subjects were of German origin and speech.¹ On the other hand, the connection of the county with that land which is now called France dates from a time when as yet the French nation and language were not. In the territory which was assigned to Charles the Bald at Verdun in 843, the great bulk of the population was indeed of Romance speech. But the governing Franks had not as yet been incorporated with the Romanised

¹ There is abundant proof that Flemish was the only language used in Ghent in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This was found so inconvenient by Philip the Fair that in 1289 he ordered that the French language should be used in the inquiry, "in order that the commissioners should the better understand the procedure and render an account thereof": the order was several times repeated. Warnkoenig, trans. Gheldorf, *Hist. de Flandre*, iii. (published also separately as *Hist. de Gand*) III; cf. *ib.* 169, "Question de l'Emploi de la Langue Française."

Celts: *Francia occidentalis* and *Francia orientalis* were again, forty years later, to be united for a brief space ; and the Carlovingian kings at Laon remained, to the last, German in language and sympathies. So it seemed by no means strange that the purely German Flanders should be assigned to the western kingdom. But in that western kingdom the provincials rapidly absorbed their conquerors. With the victory of the house of Capet in 987 appeared a monarchy French in the modern sense of the term, which soon began to introduce its own language and institutions into that dependency which had hitherto retained its Teutonic character.

From the later years of the twelfth century Flanders and Hainault were united under one line of princes. It was already seen to be the object of the French sovereigns to add to the royal domain, by skillful negotiations or force of arms, as much as possible of the territory of the great feudatories. As early as 1191 Philip Augustus had got possession of that southern part of the county which was afterwards known as Artois. To regain it Count Ferdinand went back to the English alliance, for which there

Policy of
the
French
Kings.

Philip
Augustus
gains
Artois,

and
defeating
the Count
at
Bouvines,

were some precedents in the previous century ; joining the Emperor Otto IV., whose vassal he was for the "lordship," he became a member of the great league against the French king, and shared in the disaster of Bouvines. Ferdinand and his predecessor Baldwin had already been obliged to take a more binding oath of fealty to their suzerain than had hitherto been exacted, and to do liege-homage.¹ After so crushing a defeat as Bouvines, the recovery of Artois could no longer be hoped for. Ferdinand remained in captivity until the death of Philip, and when a definitive peace was made at Melun in 1226, very hard terms were dealt to the vanquished. Honorius had, two years before, been induced to issue a bull, wherein he authorised the King of France to summon the Archbishop of Rheims and the Bishop of Senlis to excommunicate the count of Flanders if the conditions of peace were violated, and even to lay the county under interdict—a sentence which was not to be withdrawn even by the Pope himself, unless with the consent of the royal court. To this, as one of the

imposes
the Treaty
of Melun,
1226,

giving him
power to
excom-
municate
the Count,
and put
Flanders

¹ Vanderk. *Sizle*, 23. Warnkoenig-Gheld, ii. 67. Liege-homage created an obligation to follow the lord's banner during the whole of every war instead of only forty days, and to serve in person.

terms of the treaty, Ferdinand was forced to agree. Thus the Papacy prostituted its spiritual authority to serve the policy of the King of France, and put into his hands a weapon of awful power, without retaining any guarantee that it would be properly employed. Again and again in after years was this power of interdict resorted to : nothing shows more clearly the strength of the mediæval Catholic structure than the fact that for more than a century it continued to strike terror in those upon whom it was pronounced.

under
interdict,
when he
pleases.

But more than this. To unite to France the Teutonic portion of the county would perhaps be impossible. But now that, after John's forfeiture, it was no longer covered by Normandy, it would not be so difficult to conquer Walloon Flanders. This henceforth became the steadfast aim of the successive French kings ; the way was prepared in the Treaty of Melun, by the retention of Lille and Douai, two of the five important Flemish towns, in the hands of the overlord, till the conditions should have been fulfilled.

Tem-
porary
occupation
of Lille
and Douai,
a step to
the
acquisition
of
Walloon
Flanders.

In 1246, by the arbitration of Louis IX., Hainault and Flanders were separated, the former going to the son of the Countess Margaret by Bouchard d'Avesnes, the latter to Guy, her son by Guillaume de Dampierre.

1246.
Separation
of
Flanders
and
Hainault.

The intervention of the saintly king did not prevent a long struggle between the houses of Avesnes and Dampierre, which only resulted in still ~~further~~ weakening Flanders, and ~~compelling~~ the Count henceforth to rely upon the aid of France to maintain his authority.

With the middle of the thirteenth century a new factor became of political importance, the towns. To discover the precise nature of the forces at work, it becomes necessary to examine their condition in the fourteenth century, and the stages by which they had arrived at it.

It is uncertain how far the results of Maurer's investigations into the history of German towns can be applied to those of Flanders. Of German origin and speech, their political connection with France did not cut them off from fellowship with the great German body. Moreover, from a similarity in the later stages of their development we are probably justified in inferring a similarity in the earlier. The Flemish town may therefore be regarded as springing from a community or aggregation of communities, each member of which, besides the farmyard attached to his house and the strips of arable land which he

was bound to cultivate according to a general plan—usually the so-called “three-field system,”—had a right to the use of the mark or common land belonging to the whole body.¹

The town, as it at first appears, is distinguished from the neighbouring villages only by the walls which surround it.² No change was thereby made in the status of its inhabitants: whether free or dependent, their rights and duties were exactly the same as those of the free or dependent dwellers in villages outside. For a long period their occupations were the same—tillage and cattle-breeding. But, as markets sprang up, and the towns became centres of commerce, the special protection and freedom of trade granted at first only to particular merchants were extended to all the inhabitants. Freedom of trade soon brought about personal freedom for all the burghers instead of the various degrees of dependence which had before

sur-
rounded
by
walls,

and
gaining
freedom
of trade
and
person.

¹ “Le type du village Flamande au moyen âge est celui-ci: une longue rue bordée de maisons chacun avec son petit jardin, et de chaque côté à droite et à gauche les parcelles de champs cultivés, beaucoup plus longues que larges; enfin à l’entour les terres communes, la marque, formant la limite et la séparation d’avec les villages voisins.” Vanderkindere, *Notice sur l’Origine des Magistrats Communaux*, 25. For traces of the mark system in Flemish towns, v. *ib.* 27 seq.

² Maurer, *Städteverfassung*, i. 30.

existed, and the community ceased to be entirely agricultural.¹

Growth of
a
magistracy Meanwhile a magistracy had been provided for the towns thus formed, by a junction of the mark organisation with the judicial system of the "centena." The Frank kingdom had been divided into *gaue*, and from the Scabini of the Centena, *centenæ*, *hundertschaften*, i.e. hundreds. But the *gau* seems to have been merely an administrative division; the only assembly of the people, and therefore the only judicature, was that of the *centena*. Though presided over by a royal functionary, the whole body of suitors were the judges, and it was only gradually that the custom arose of electing a kind of representative judicial committee, the "scabini."² Charles the Great recognised and defined this arrangement: the scabini, thus changed into royal officers, became the sole judges in the court of the *centena*, and, except at three annual assemblies, which appear soon to have dropped into desuetude, the people were relieved from the burden of attendance. The stages by which the scabini (*échevins*, *schöffen*) were transformed into a town magistracy are still

¹ An excellent summary of the process, *Ib.* 653-5.

² Cf. "The twelve senior thegns" in England. Stubbs, *Const. Hist.* i. 103.

obscure: it has been suggested that the growth of immunities withdrew so much of the country from their jurisdiction that practically nothing remained to them save the town in which they sat.¹ But as the town increased in size, and the relations of the inhabitants to one another became more complex, the necessity arose for an administration over and above the customary arrangements of the mark, and these new duties were naturally assumed by the *échevinage*. Yet the old officers of the mark, those who watched over the observance of the by-laws, had not vanished. As in the German towns two bodies of officers are seen, one for the maintenance of the public peace, the other to superintend the affairs of the mark, so by the side of the *échevins* in the Flemish towns appear *choremanni*, the men of the *keure* or Charter of Customs.² These soon receive the name *jurati*, and

and the
officers of
the mark.

¹ Vanderk. *Siecle*, 61; *Notice* 10 *seq.* For a sketch of the Salian Law, v. Stubbs, *u.s.* 54.

² Maurer, *ib.* 438. "Dieser Stadtmarkfrieden war ursprünglich von dem Königsfrieden durchaus verschieden. Darum findet man in den alten Städten immer zweierlei Behörden, öffentliche oder königliche Beamte zur Handhabung des Königsfriedens, und markgenossenschaftliche Beamte, die Rathmannen, zur Besorgung der Angelegenheiten der Stadtmark."

This is worked out for Flanders and Brabant by Vanderk., *Notice* 38-45. Cf. *Siecle*, 72. The most definite information is found in the

are the germ of the later council. It has even been conjectured that of the two burgomasters who are to be found in most Flemish towns—save Ghent, where the presiding magistrate was “the first échevin”—one was the chief of the échevins, the other of the *jurés* or *conseillers*.¹

The
descend-
ants of the
members
of the
mark
become
an
oligarchy.

In Flanders, as in Germany, the descendants of the members of the mark community were slowly transformed into a governing oligarchy. When they first appear, there is as yet no class of independent landless men. The family is the unit: the only full citizens, therefore, are the heads of households, who meet in the town assembly to make by-laws and elect the officers of the mark.² The possession of land within the town was long the necessary condition for obtaining citizenship;³ mere settlers upon the land of the community or of an individual were not citizens,

Charter given to Arques in 1231: “Scabinos habeant et choremannos, per quos negotia terminentur et communes utilitates disponantur. Scabini judicent de iis quae pertinent ad scabinatum; choremanni de pace tractent et de utilitate communitatis villae, et de forisfactorum emendatione.”

¹ Vanderk. *Sicle*, 78.

² Maurer, ii. 197-8. Cf. Wallace, *Russia*, ch. viii.

³ *Ib.* 195. “Nur in Grund und Boden in der Stadtmark angesessene Leute konnten vollberechtigte Stadtmarkgenossen oder Stadtbürger sein.” Cf. the custom of Lauder in Maine, *Village Communities*, 95.

but only sojourners¹ under the protection of the town. On the other hand, as late as the fourteenth century, the terms "bourgeois héritables," "viri hereditati" were applied to the owners of land within the town, inheriting their citizenship with their estates.²

Bourgeois
héritables.

The third element in the growth of the towns seems to have been the Merchant Guild. Its exact relation to the other elements is, however, vehemently disputed. According to one theory, an early association as a guild for mutual protection, "convivium conjuratum," was a germ out of which the "communa" arose:³ with the development of commerce it would become increasingly a trading body. But it is far more probable that the Merchant Guild was a later

The
Merchant
Guild.

¹ A Bruges charter of 1288 distinguishes "li bourgeois et li bourgeoisie et li manans de la ville." Gilliodts, *Études sur l'Hist. de Belg.* 481. The usual German terms were "Beisassen" and "Schutzverwandte." Maurer, ii. 221 *seq.*

² Vanderk. *Siecle*, 58; Warnk.-Gheld. ii. 235, iii. 119. In the charter to Ghent of 1192, the testimony of the *vir hereditatus* is of special value, *ib.* 228; and, according to that of 1296, taxes could not be imposed save by the consent of the majority of *adheritts*, *ib.* 84. The corresponding German terms were *Erbbürger* and *Erbgesessene Bürger*, e.g. at Hamburg, Vienna. Maurer, ii. 218-220. The sojourners are occasionally called "habitantes non hereditati," *ib.* 223.

³ Brentano, in *Ordinances of English Guilds* (Early Engl. Text Soc.) xcvi. B. has recently revived Wilda's theory, deriving all town organisation from the guild. Cf. Heusler, *Städteverf.* 11.

Coomans-
gulde.

creation, an association of the burgher families when the mark organisation began to break down,¹ in order to strengthen themselves against the new elements which were entering the town.² That there was such a merchant-guild seems certain from the frequent use of the terms "coomans" and "coomans-gulde," which have so much perplexed Flemish antiquaries. "Cooman," often applied in the thirteenth century to the "poorters" or full citizens, is, apparently, only another form of "koopman" or "kaufman," *i.e.* merchant. That they were as yet the only full citizens, and monopolised the government of the towns, is shown by the clause in the charter to Ghent of 1275, which ordained that from the "coomans-gulde" only should the *échévins* be chosen.³

¹ The common lands begin to be built upon and sold, so that the original tie is weakened, *e.g.* Lens, 1225. Vanderk. Notice 46, *n.* For the general movement, Maurer, ii. 727.

² Vanderk. *Siecle*, 63. Maurer, i. 164, *seq.* Maurer grants that in most towns the burgher families formed a kind of closed guild ii. 521-2, and that the merchant members of the burgher families formed societies, *ib.* 358; but he insists that these were not guilds in the true sense of the word. That "the Hanses and trading-companies had no influence on the development of the town constitution" is disproved by the Hanse of London, which certainly served to maintain the oligarchic rule.

³ Warnk.-Gheld. ii. 239; iii. 99. For the name, cf. English "Ceapmanne-gild." Stubbs, *Const. Hist.* i. 416.

Whatever may have been the processes by which it was brought about, an oligarchy of wealth was gradually created. The guild was originally a society of men possessing full citizenship, for which the possession of land was necessary. Though most of its members would, after a time, be merchants, citizen-craftsmen were not excluded.¹ But, with the growth of wealth, the poorters turned entirely to trade, and handicrafts were abandoned to the landless poor and to the escaped serfs who had flocked to the towns to gain enfranchisement.² That the merchant-guild became the governing body and exclusive, there is abundant proof. The most striking is that afforded by the constitution of the Hanse of London, which monopolised the trade with England. This was a confederation consisting of all the Flemish towns of any importance, and, for a time, including even Chalons, Rheims, and S. Quentin; but the chief members of the alliance were Bruges, from which was chosen the "Count of the Hanse," and in which the common chest was deposited, and Ypres, from which was chosen the "scildrake" or standard-bearer.³ As it is

Creation
of an
oligarchy
of wealth.

Merchant-
guild
identical
with the
governing
body,
proved by
the organ-
isation of
the Hanse
of London.

¹ Maurer, i. 132, ii. 200.

² Brentano, cvii.

³ Warnk.-Gheld., ii. 208-11; the Statutes, *ib.* 506. Cf. Gilliodts (van Severen) *Inventaire des Archives de Bruges*, iv. 272 *seq.*, where

No
mechanic
could
become
échevin.

expressly declared in the charter granted to Bruges in 1241, and in that to Damme about the same period, that no artisan shall become échevin unless he has abandoned his manual labour for a year and a day, and has become a member of the Hanse,¹ it is interesting to see in the statutes of the association what the conditions of membership were. Sons of members, we find, can obtain admission on payment of five sous three deniers; all others have to pay thirty sous three deniers. But artisans, among whom are mentioned weavers, fullers, shearers, carpenters, shoemakers "who work with the awl," dyers "who dye with their own hands and have blue nails," woolbeaters, tinkers "who go crying through the streets," retail cheesemongers and beersellers, retail dealers in salt and bread, workers in lambskin and minever "who work with their own hands," and all "those who sell by the pound," cannot become members save on the most stringent conditions.

will be found a list of receptions for eight years, 1285, 1288, 1290-2, 1294, 1297, 1299—in all one hundred and fifty-nine, an annual average of about twenty. Allowing thirty years to each we arrive at 600 as the approximate number of members. The significance of this is obvious.

¹ "Insuper manuoperarius quicumque fuerit, nisi per annum et diem a manuopere suo abstinuerit et hansam Londoniensem adeptus sit, a nobis in scabinum eligi non debet."—*Invent. Bruges*, iv. 278.

They must formally, in the presence of the échevins of their town and within that town, renounce their craft, and then, after a year and a day's waiting, they must obtain letters patent declaring the consent of the town, which consent they cannot obtain unless they give a mark of gold, "or as much more as shall appear good to the échevins and council of the town." Then, and not before, can they buy their freedom in the Hanse by the usual payment of thirty sous three deniers.¹ Such regulations, elastic only to the advantage of the oligarchy, effectually prevented all but a very few exceptionally prosperous masters from entering the Hanse. The part taken in the elaborate process by the échevins and councils of the towns proves that all alike were ruled by a small class of well-to-do merchants. In this respect

Difficulty with which an artisan became a member of the Hanse.

¹ "Illi vero qui non sunt legitimi, hoc est universi, qui veniunt in Angliam vel alibi ubi libertas ista teneri debet, utpote illi qui subscripti sunt i.e. textores, fullones, tonsores, . . . casearii, etc. Si hujusmodi homines inventi fuerint ultra mensam vel in Anglia vel alibi ubi libertas ista tenetur, causa negotiandi, perdant omnia quae ibi habebant, nisi per annum et diem officiis suis renunciaverint coram scabinis villae suae infra villam suam legitime, et legitimum testimonium per litteras villae suae patentes obtulerint quod caritatem suam habeant, quam caritatem nullo modo habere possunt nisi prius dederint unam marcā auri vel tantum plus quantum scabinis et consilio villae suae bonum visum fuerit; tunc possunt hansam suam emere xxx sol. iii den. sterling."—Warnk.-Gheld., ii. 506.

the Hanse of London is like the more famous Teutonic Hanse, which was wont to expel from its body towns guilty of democratic innovations.

A small
group of
great
families
monopo-
lize power.

From among these trading burghers or "poorters," certain families by greater riches, and the constant possession of official dignity, succeeded in gaining a preeminence over the rest. Of these some may have descended from holders of fiefs in or near the towns, *e.g.* the Vaernewycks at Ghent: the castellated houses of men of this class had been to an Archbishop of Rheims in the twelfth century a signal proof of their wicked pride.¹ Down to the end of the thirteenth century almost all the chief families were engaged in trade.² But this could not fail to be altered upon the rise of the bastard chivalry of the fourteenth century, with its narrow caste spirit and contempt for peddling commerce. Long ago, with the disappearance of the various degrees of dependent and semi-servile condition within the towns, had the burghers become in all respects the equals of the freeholders in the country; a condition expressed in Germany by the term "ritterbürtig."

¹ Warnk.-Gheld, ii. 235-6.

² *Ib.* 239. In the Inquest of 1296 the members of the chief families of Ghent are described as "*markans et bourgeois hyrritavles.*"

which cannot without danger of misconception be translated "of knightly birth."¹ But to become actually a "Ritter" or knight, a burgher must fulfil the duties of that position, *i.e.* follow his lord to the field on horseback, gaining in return exemption from the payment of taxes. If, however, he was unable or unwilling to make use of these rights, he had to serve on foot, and this, there is no doubt, the great majority of the burghers continued to do.² It is thus we must explain the differences in rank which show themselves among the "bourgeois heritables," the full citizens of the Flemish towns,—between the "noble men and knights," who are distinguished by the prefix "Ser," and the rest of the poorters.³ But, meanwhile, from the freeholders and vassals in the country who had made service on horseback their main occupation had sprung up a military estate or order, the knightly body, the "Ritterstand"; while the lesser freeholders, unable to live in "knightly fashion," were pressed down into a dependent peasant condition, "Bauernstand."⁴

Distinction
between
knightly
and non-
knightly
poorters.

¹ Maurer, ii. 204 *seq.*

² *Ib.* 210.

³ In Ratisbon the distinction was "*meliores tam milites quam cives*;" in Worms, "*nobiles et cives*," or "*nobiles cives et cives ex plebe*."—*Ib.*

⁴ *Ib.* 735 *seq.*

Influence
of
fourteenth
century
chivalry.

So in the towns the poorters must abandon their merchandise and live in knightly manner if they would be held the equals of the knights outside.

Ledich-
gangers

As in Germany the knightly citizens were called

"Müssiggänger," and said "müssig gehen," "to be unemployed," so in Flanders they become known as "Ledichgangers," by which was meant that their wealth freed them from the necessity of trading.¹

Thus not only were the differences between the "grands bourgeois," and the rest of the burghers accentuated, but also to the determination of the rulers to maintain their hold on the government of the towns was added the miserable class-hatred of the new pseudo-chivalry.

Their future antagonists had been rapidly gaining strength. While the mark community remained unchanged, there had been no need for a special class of handicraftsmen. Such articles as were required for the use of the family were made by its members. But around the lord's castle, within

¹ "Ledichgangers" at *Ghent*, *Compte of 1327* quoted by Vanderk., *Siècle*, 159, n. 2; at *Audenarde*, Pauw., *Conspiration d'Audenarde* in *Annales de la Société d'Emulation*, XXV. pp. viii. xxi.; at *Antwerp*, Vand. *ib.* 69, n.; "Ledichluyden" at *S. Trond* and *Sluys*, Pauw. *ib.* xxi.; "Otiosi" at *Liège*, Maurer, ii. 736.

or just outside the town, were a number of unfree or semi-free servants, providing for the wants of the seigneurial household or garrison. When the number of such servants was large, those following the same occupation were naturally grouped together into "Aemte," "Officia," and placed under a superintendent appointed by the seigneur. With the disappearance of servitude these groups of workmen gradually freed themselves from all dependence on their lords.¹ Thus, when crowds of landless freemen and runaway serfs entered the town to enjoy the immunities which it possessed, they found societies existing which they might join or copy for themselves. On the other hand, the creation of entirely free guilds assisted those artisans still attached more or less to the castle to secure their own independence. Thus very shortly, all guilds, whatever their origin, were identical in character;² in the thirteenth century they attained definite form. The rise of the artisan-crafts, at once the result and the cause of an immense expansion of trade, was nothing less than an industrial revolution, and, like all industrial revolutions, of necessity produced a political revolution. It is our

Origin of
the
artisan
guilds.

Attain
definite
form in
the
thirteenth
century,

¹ Maurer, ii. 321-342.

² *Ib.* 342-345.

object to show by what stages this change, common to all western Europe, was produced in one small part of it, Flanders—and more especially in Ghent. But it is necessary as a preliminary to understand what the guild organisation was ; though much has of late been written thereon, it is expedient to sketch some of its more important characteristics.

Character-

ised by

I.

Small
shops.

In the first place, there were no large manufactories ; all the work was done in small shops, and the guild regulations forbade either the creation of larger workshops or the union of two small ones.¹ Each master usually employed about three journeymen, with whom he worked, and who at least earned half as much as himself.² There was no jealousy between employer and employed, inasmuch as the latter could without much difficulty, if he were industrious, save sufficient capital to become a master himself. Division of labour was carried very far, though without the modern stimulus of elaborate specialised machinery. Each branch of manufacture had its

II.
General
equality.

¹ Vanderk. *Siccle*, 107. Huytens, *Rech. sur les Corporations Gandoises*, 34.

² The regulations of the Bruges weavers' guild ordained that of five deniers the master should have three, the "valet" two. Moke. quoted by Brentano, cxxxvi. n 3.

guild ; so that at Ghent fifty-nine guilds have been counted, at Bruges fifty-two. Of these the weavers and fullers, employed in the staple industry of the country, were by far the most important ; some estimate of their numbers may be made from the fact that, in a period of depression, more than two thousand workshops were in activity in Ghent. Ghent, however, was the centre of the woollen industry. In relation to that city, Bruges held somewhat the same position as Liverpool to-day to Manchester ; it was a trading rather than a manufacturing centre. The woollen manufacture was indeed carried on at Bruges, but to a much smaller extent ; its prosperity was due rather to its position as an entrepôt and staple town. It may in truth be regarded as the trading centre of Western Europe : there the Italian merchants bringing their wares from the East met the agents of the Teutonic Hanse, which monopolised the trade of the Baltic, and had at Bruges one of its principal counters. The town was famous for the magnificent hotels of foreign merchants, who had agents continually employed there, while to Ghent they only came for the fairs and market-days.

Difference
between
Ghent and
Bruges.

Moreover, the guilds were self-governing. They

III.
Self-
govern-
ment.

elected their own councils and chief, "dekan," "doyen," or dean, who presided at their assemblies, and acted as judge in peace and captain in war. At their meetings, minute regulations were made as to the processes of the craft ; and an active supervision was exercised over the whole conduct and morality of the members.¹ As units the artisans were powerless ; now that they were united they were able to enter upon that long struggle with the burgher oligarchy which marks the fourteenth century.

Com-
mence-
ment of the
struggle
with the
burghers.
Causes :—

I.
Conscious-
ness of
strength.

Chief among the causes which led them to struggle for some participation in the government of the town was naturally this consciousness of strength. The military arrangements of the Flemish cities were complicated and are not yet fully known. But it is on the whole certain that, while the poorters were divided into parishes or wards, each under its "hooftman" or captain, the members of the craft guilds marched beneath the banner of the guilds and were led by their deans.² Though fighting on foot, they were formidable when well trained ; and it will

¹ Vanderk. *Sûcle*, 106-123, gives a good sketch of the guild regulations.

² Huytens, *Recherches*, 114, 117.

be seen that the first steps to a more popular form of government were taken after that victory at Courtray which taught the modern world the capabilities of infantry.

In years of peace the condition of the artisan was tolerably comfortable. A fuller's average daily earnings would, it is reckoned, purchase twelve loaves or the third of a sheep ;¹ while the rent of the wooden cabin in which he lived was very small. But this prosperity lasted only as long as trade was good. Credit scarcely existed, and the artisan was not likely to hoard money in a hut which would probably be burnt down very soon. Peace was exceptional, and war put a stop in whole or in part to industry. Taxation was heavy, and weighed especially on the lower classes, in that it was chiefly levied on necessities—grain, peat, beer, wine. Of the total revenue of the town at least three-fourths were raised from duties of this kind. As all sanitary considerations were disregarded, epidemics were frequent, and the artisans, whose condition was much worse than that of the poorters living in substantial stone houses, "steenen," of course suffered most. Plague might be

II.
Actual hardships, to some extent attributable to the action of the rulers, e.g. war and taxation.

¹ Vanderk. *Sicle*, 127, 131.

attributed to the wrath of Heaven, but taxation and questions of peace and war were decided by the magistrates, and it was natural that the artisans, the great bulk of the town population, should demand some control over what so nearly affected them.

Corruption of the échevins.

That the poorters were insolent or violent in their conduct toward the artisans may or may not be true ; that some of the younger members of the ruling class were marked by the vices of a ruling caste is proved by the town records.¹ But more than this ; contemporary writers accuse the échevins of favouring their own order, and of corrupt practices : “ many there are who spend much to gain this honour, not to dispense justice, but to make their profit.”²

The doctrine.

There were therefore abundant causes at work to produce a popular ferment ; and, as in all other times of revolution, the doctrine was not wanting, although, as usual, the theory far outran the actual results.

Possible influence of scholasticism.

Scholasticism had subjected to examination the origin and rational justification of government and property, and though its direct influence was only felt by the educated classes, it must not be omitted in an enumeration of the causes which prevented acquiescence

¹ Vanderk. *Sixle*, 141.

² *Ib.* 140.

in the existing order of things. But there were teachers whose lessons were more explicit, and less difficult to understand. The Fraticelli or "spiritual Franciscans," following the "divine poverty" of their master in opposition to the luxury which was creeping into their order and to the magnificence of the Papal Court, had begun to preach the natural equality of man, and even the rightfulness of equal or common possession of property. They met with many to sympathise with their doctrines. A Flemish poet of the period writes: "God gave this fleeting earth to mankind in common, that they might feed and clothe themselves, and live pure lives, but now greed is so great that every one desires to possess the whole himself."¹ Throughout, the Friars are on the popular side; it is a Friar Minor who gives the most sympathetic account of the revolution of 1302, and it was from Mendicants that the craftsmen received the benediction before the victory of Courtray and the disaster of Roosebeke.

The Fran-
ciscans.

Popular
ideas.

The earlier history of Ghent illustrates with sufficient clearness the general lines of development in the other towns—the growth of a burgher oligarchy

History of
Ghent.

¹ Vanderk. *Siecle*, 143.

from the mark community, and the gradual substitution for an hereditary and irresponsible magistracy of one elected by and answerable to all the members of the guilds. Within the peninsula formed by the confluence of the Scheldt and the Lys appears in the tenth century the *Portus Ganda* or *Gandensis*, having on either side the monasteries of S. Peter, and S. Bavon, and guarded by a strong castle.¹ It would indeed seem to have been originally dependent upon the Abbot of S. Peter, paying cens, tithe and river dues; but from such dependence it quickly freed itself, and with the growth of trade it soon became known as an important centre of industry. The villages around the two monasteries long remained independent, and "seigneuries enclavées," with both "haute" and "basse justice," remained until the French Revolution.² But, from among this bundle of communities and jurisdictions, the *oppidum Gandense* forces itself into even greater predominance, and adds to itself most of its rivals. The thirteenth century is especially marked by the acquisition of adjacent territory—the most important gains being the *Oudburg* (Viesburg, Urbs Comitum), i.e. the commune within the castle, in 1274,

¹ Warnk., -Gheld. iii. 11-20.

² *Ib.* 35.

and the *S. Borchgravengerechte*, i.e. the jurisdiction of the burggrave or châtelain in 1309.¹ As the method of occupying and cultivating land was the same in all communities, whether free or dependent, no change therein was brought about by such annexations. The members of the small community became members with equal rights of that greater body to which they were now added, and their common land was subjected to the control of officers elected by the whole town.²

The origin of the communal magistracy has already been sketched. However it may at first have been appointed, the échevinage had followed the feudal tendency; everywhere, in the twelfth century, when our information begins, it had become hereditary in certain great families, the "*lignages échevinaux*." In Ghent these were, according to tradition, the four families Ser Senders, Ser Symoens, Borluut, and Bette.³ From the last quarter of the twelfth century a series of charters comes to our aid; a fire in 1176 is said to have destroyed earlier documents. The

Here-
ditary
échevins.

¹ Warnk.-Gheld. 29-30.

² Maurer, ii. 131 *seq.*, shows the various ways in which the incorporation of villages took place.

³ Warnk.-Gheld. iii. 93.

The
charter of
1176.

charter of 1176 or 1178 has an importance beyond that due to the fact that it affords the earliest information of the constitution of Ghent; for a grant exactly similar was made to Ypres about the same time, to Audenarde and Bruges some ten years later.¹ The chief Flemish towns had therefore, at this period, reached exactly the same point in their development. The rights of the *échevins* are fully recognised. They are to hold the pleas of the Count in his presence or that of his deputy;² they are to appease dissensions among the good men of the town;³ and with the consent of the Count's justiciar they can impose taxes on bread, wine, and other merchandise, though half the produce thereof is to go to the Count.⁴ But the Count apparently attempts to gain for himself influence in the creation of this body by the provision that on the death of an *échevin* his successor shall be appointed by the Count.⁵ Though it is almost certain this clause stood in the charter of Ghent in the same form as in those of the other

Attempt of
the Count
to control
the
appoint-
ment
of
échevins.

¹ Warnk.-Gheld. iii. 62. Text, ii. 417.

² Art. 25.

³ Art. 12.

⁴ Art. 18.

⁵ Art. 22. "Quando aliquis scabinus decedet, alius ei substituetur electione comitis, non aliter." Ghent variant, "alius ei substituetur nec aliter."

towns, the extant Ghent copy omits the words *comitis electione*, so that the article simply runs that the vacancy shall be filled up according to the old usage.¹ That it should have been worth while to falsify the article, sufficiently proves its importance.

The Gantois took advantage of the disputes which arose upon the death of Count Philip in 1191 to wrest from the new rulers—his sister Margaret and her husband Baldwin of Hainault—consent to a new charter, which recognised and strengthened the old system.² The very preamble, "It is a divine thing and agreeable with human reason, that as princes wish to be honoured and obeyed by their subjects, they should preserve for them, firm and unshaken, their laws and customs which are not discordant with reason," sufficiently shows the spirit in which it was drawn up. The town-mark constitution had reached its highest point ; the intrusion of alien elements had scarcely begun. Whatever may have been the consequences of the charter of 1176, the échevinage is now declared to be a close co-opting body : "It belongs to the liberty of the town that it should have thirteen échevins by whose judgment shall be treated

Charter of
1191

recognise
the right
of
co-option.

¹ Warnk.-Gheld. iii. 73, n 2.

² *Jb*, 64 ; Text, 226.

all causes pertaining to the community ; . . . if one of these should die or resign his office, the rest shall elect another and present him to the prince, and the prince will confirm their election, so that their number shall ever be complete."¹

Break up
of the
mark
system.

It is probable that encroachments had already been made on the common lands, for it was found necessary to declare that no one shall take possession of or build on the land common to all the town.² The old family bond, which had been an integral part of the primitive mark-system, had already disappeared. It was long impossible—even unthinkable—to alienate from the family the homestead and the land attached to it; if the "lignage" came to an end, it reverted to the community. These ideas had gradually been weakened till, at this period, the kindred seldom had more than a right of preemption.³ But individualist and commercial tendencies were already so strong in Ghent that it was declared in this charter, "Ghent has this liberty, that, if any one wishes, he may sell or pledge his inheritance to strangers as well as to relations, notwithstanding any reason of consanguinity or kindred."⁴ It is obvious that when

¹ Art. 2

² Art. 17.

³ Vanderk. Notice, 32-3.

⁴ Art. 19.

family ties had thus been weakened, the aristocracy of birth was likely soon to become one of wealth.

What circumstances enabled Count Ferdinand to abolish this system in 1212, it is impossible to say. It must be remembered that, though in theory all citizens were eligible for office, the *échevinage* was practically monopolised by a few powerful families. The substitution, therefore, of annual *échevins* chosen by electors nominated by the prince, not only increased the Count's power, but also destroyed the monopoly of the ruling families, and gave the ordinary burghers a greater chance of obtaining office.

Charter of
1212,
annual
échevins
chosen by
electors,
nominated
by the
Count.

Sixteen years later the whole system was changed, and a constitution was established which was destined to stand for a considerable period as the bulwark of the power of the oligarchy.¹ To reward, it is said, the rich families of Ghent for their generous aid in ransoming Ferdinand, a magistracy was created in 1228, at once for life and changing.¹ The "Thirty-Nine" came into existence. Chosen for the first time by the then ruling *échevins*, the Thirty-Nine were to hold their office for life. They were divided into three bodies: thirteen served as acting *échevins*, thirteen as

Charter of
1228
establish-
ing the
Thirty-
Nine.

¹ Warnk.-Gh. iii. 94. Text, 263.

councillors, thirteen were "vagues," *consilarii vacui*, i.e. without definite functions. The "vagues" of one year became the councillors of the next, the échevins of the next, and then again "vagues." Vacancies by death were to be filled up by the acting échevins. It is at once obvious how completely the oligarchy were victorious; in the coming struggle the active belligerents—the artisans—are throughout passively favoured by that large class of burghers who were almost as devoid as the artisans themselves of any effective share in the government of the town.

Vacancies
to be
filled by
co-option :
victory of
the
magnates.

Com-
mence-
ment of the
struggle
with the
artisans.

Scarcely twenty years had passed when the first note of the approaching contest was sounded. In 1249 Ghent, Antwerp, Louvain, Brussels, Malines, Maestricht, and some smaller neighbouring towns made a common engagement not to shelter artisans who had caused disorders in any of the allied towns.¹ The coalition seems to have been successful; for thirty

¹ Duyse, *Invent. des Archives de Gand*, 37, No. 100: "Lettres par lesquelles les bourgeois de Louvain s'engagent envers les Gantois d'expulser de leur cité tout foulon, tisserand, ou membre quelconque d'une autre corporation de Gand, convaincu d'avoir machiné contre les privilèges de cette ville. Tout Louvainiste qui l'aura hébergé et nourri pendant plus d'un jour, sera passible d'une amende de 20 sous." The facts in the latter part of this chapter are, when no other reference is given, taken from M. Kervyn de Lettenhove's valuable though somewhat uncritical *Hist. de Flandre*.

years the rule of the old families was undisturbed. In 1274 the magistrates of Ghent renewed their alliance with Brussels, Louvain, Tirlemont, and Malines; in none of these towns was refuge to be allowed to craftsmen who had sought to change the constitution of that to which they belonged. But soon the storm broke, and henceforth there was no real peace till the accession of the Valois Counts. From the first we notice a striking arrangement of parties. The Count, aiming at increased centralisation and control over the municipal authorities, was ready to aid the lower classes to gain one of their objects, namely, the annual presentation of accounts by the échevins, whom they accused of making large fortunes from the taxes wrung from the poor. This necessary connection of interests, and the possibility of getting some real control over the town by playing off the artisans against the poorters were, however, but dimly discerned by the Counts. None of the princes of the house of Dampierre seem to have possessed much statesmanlike insight, and Guy, in many respects the best of them, was only too ready to abandon his artisan-allies, if he could gain some temporary advantage by making terms with their enemies.

1249,
1271.
Alliance of
the ruling
class in the
Nether-
land
towns
against the
artisans.

Necessary
alliance of
prince and
craftsman
not
discerned
by the
former.

1275,
Overthrow
of the
Thirty-
Nine by
the
Countess
Margaret,

relying
upon
popular
support.

Alliance
of the
King of
France
and the
poorters
against the
Count and
the
artisans.

Soon after the above-mentioned alliance had been signed, the Countess Margaret suddenly appeared in Ghent, and, relying upon popular support, dismissed the Thirty-Nine, and substituted for them a council of thirty, consisting of thirteen échevins, thirteen councillors, and four treasurers, more completely under her own control. In the name of the craftsmen, a letter was sent to the suzerain, Philip III. of France, in which the conduct of Margaret was highly lauded; for "they had not heard say that the échevins had rendered any accounts for the last nine years, and they were assured that they charged the city with debts." Supposing, as is almost certain, that this letter was drawn up by some clerk in Margaret's train, it none the less proves two things: first, that the administration of the Thirty-Nine was of such a character that they might without improbability be charged with embezzlement and injustice in taxation; and, secondly, that the dispossessed magistrates were expected to appeal to their overlord. Here we have the first intimation of the alliance between the town oligarchy and the King of France, the steady enemy of Flemish independence, in opposi-

tion alike to the Count, who wished to enlarge his authority, and to the artisans agitating for a share in their own government. The Thirty-Nine, as was expected, appealed to Philip: two French ambassadors came to Ghent in 1277 to examine the state of affairs, suppressed the new magistracy and confirmed the charter of 1278.¹

1277,
Philip III.
suppresses
the new
magis-
tracy.

In less than two years Guy renewed the attempt of his mother, though in a somewhat different way. He would consent to the continuance in office of the Thirty-Nine, but demanded the rendering of an annual account. The magistrates, terrified probably by the popular risings in Bruges and Ypres, agreed to a compromise. In return for a large sum of money Guy confirmed their liberties, while they recognised his right to a general control of expenditure and to criminal jurisdiction in reserved cases—chiefly, of course, in matters of treason. Upon these concessions Guy immediately placed a liberal construction: several of his more prominent opponents were

1279,
Count Guy
renews the
contest.

¹ The alliance of the burghers with the king against the artisans is not peculiar to Flanders. It was Philip the Fair's constant policy to support the ruling class, possibly because he feared that a town democratically governed would escape from his control altogether. *V. Boutaric, France sous Philippe le Bel*, 149 for Abbeville, 150 for Rouen.

1284, his
partial
victory.

imprisoned, in spite of the protests of their colleagues. Again they appealed to the king. But now, thinking probably that he was sure under almost any circumstances of the support of the poorters, and unwilling further to alienate the Count, Philip referred them to the court of their lord, which sentenced them to pay a heavy fine. Not content with this, Guy declared that they had forfeited their property, while they naturally insisted that their individual transgressions were covered by the fine paid by the town. To Philip's suggestion that all offences should be atoned for by an additional fine, Guy replied, probably with justice, that this would enable the Thirty-Nine to escape punishment altogether, for they could wring the money from the craftsmen who were blameless. While the matter was still undecided, the magistrates, in accordance with their recent agreement, presented the account for the year. Guy refused to ratify it, so on appeal to Philip it was ratified by the French king. The Count persisted in declaring that the magistrates tyrannised over the commons, and finally, in 1284, Philip consented that an inquiry into the whole administration should be opened at Ghent.

Meanwhile, in 1280-1, the artisans in Bruges and Ypres had taken the matter into their own hands. They complained that the échevins had brought the town into debt and had squandered the money raised by taxes on the necessities of life, and that the Hanse of London, having a monopoly of the import of wool, demanded too high a price for it. Therefore they asked that the magistrates should render an account every year, and that the craftsmen should be given some share in the election of magistrates and council. In both towns, upon the refusal of their demands, the populace rose and sacked the houses of the wealthy. Guy was not likely to let so good an opportunity slip. He dared not offend all the wealthy men of the Netherland towns by infringing the privileges of the Hanse, but he somewhat pacified the artisans by authorising them to buy their wool where they pleased—save in England; a concession which was of little value since that country was almost the only source of supply. The old Town Hall of Bruges, containing the city charters, had been burnt down. Guy refused to restore them, and even executed six leading citizens to inspire terror into the rest. The magis-

1280-1.
Rising of
artisans
in Bruges
and Ypres.

Tem-
porary
alliance of
Count and
craftsmen.

trates were, however, still bold enough to appeal to Philip, who promised the restoration of their privileges; but, when Guy did at last consent to grant a charter, he reserved to himself appellate jurisdiction in all cases, and imposed the obligation of an annual account, thus gratifying the artisans by humbling their rulers and making them responsible to a higher power.¹

Yet the
oligarchy
retained
their
power,

Yet the aristocracy had, on the whole, maintained their ground, and kept the magistracy in their hands.

New measures of precaution were taken; in Bruges it was made illegal for more than seven artisans to assemble without special permission; in Ypres the penalty for infraction of the new regulations was loss of sight. Moreover, in the former town Guy himself was not unwilling, now that he had gained his immediate object, to share in the spoils of victory over the crafts, and confiscated three quarters of the property of the drapers for his own benefit. This clearly shows how little Guy appreciated the position of affairs, and how little he knew upon whom alone he could rely for support. A momentary success was all he cared for, and this being obtained, he was ready to

and the
Count
abandons
his allies.

¹ Cf. Vanderk. *Sixle*, 148 *seq.*

throw away the instrument by which it had been gained.

In Bruges, Guy had won a temporary victory by the aid of allies whose importance he did not realise. In Ghent, the Thirty-Nine seemed about to fall, when a new king succeeded to the French throne, who was destined to bring matters to an issue and show the true relation of the various parties. Under Philip the Fair (1285-1314) will be seen a more skilful employment of the elements of discord in the county, together with a determined effort to unite the whole county at once to the royal domain—a new feature in the royal policy. Already has been seen,—and this is the key to the history of the next century,—the alliance, becoming traditional, of the ruling class with the French sovereign, they to maintain their power alike against Count and craftsmen, he to strengthen his hold upon the county. When, therefore, in the next few years, the governing class showed their readiness to accept the rule of the French king, the artisans, struggling against them, became of necessity the defenders of the independence of the county, and the staunch supporters of that Count who had so recklessly abandoned them. Flemish historians

1285.
Accession
of Philip
the Fair.

His adoption of the cause of the poor, forces the artisans to defend the independence of the county, and to become the "national party."

Relations
between
the Count
and the
King.

are wont to speak of the policy of Philip the Fair as peculiarly wicked. Yet the events of the previous decade have shown how real the authority of the suzerain over his vassal had become. The fact that Margaret thought it expedient to have a declaration sent to Paris in the name of the artisans, and the frequent appeals of the Thirty-Nine, show that the royal right of appellate jurisdiction was, with regard to Flanders at this period, a much more real thing than it ever became with regard to Brittany while under its Dukes. But in Flanders the spirit of provincial particularism was strengthened by race-enmity, and favoured by circumstances.

Treaty of
Melun
confirmed

Philip the Fair had shown with what views he regarded Flanders by demanding, upon his accession, that not only Guy, but also the nobles and communes, should swear to observe the treaty of Melun. After long opposition Philip gained his point, and thus obtained a fresh recognition of that power of coercion which he was soon to employ. He almost immediately began to exert his influence in favour of the Ghent magistracy, who were still engaged in their struggle with the Count. It was declared by a royal ordinance, that the goods of the citizens could not

be seized by the prince save with the king's consent, and that the aggrieved person was in all cases entitled to appeal to him. It was long before Guy understood Philip's real object, though it must already have been clear to all the statesmen of the time. But his eldest son, Robert of Bethune, seems to have had a momentary perception of the true state of things. If a reconciliation between the Count and the magistracy could be brought about, Philip would be without a pretext for intervention. Visiting Ghent during his father's absence in France, Robert proposed to the Thirty-Nine to refer all matters in dispute to the échevins of S. Omer. The offer was accepted; the arbitrators pronounced against all the recent exactions and demands of the Count, and Robert had sufficient influence over his father to induce him to confirm their decision. But Philip was not to be so easily balked. Ignorant of the importance of the step he had just taken, Guy was easily brought back to his former frame of mind. Philip was able to persuade the infatuated Count that his best support was in the royal power, and that it was derogatory to his dignity to allow his quarrel with his own subjects to be judged by their friends in another town.

and
Robert of
Bethune
balked in
an attempt
to get rid
of royal
inter-
vention.

Nothing loth, Guy consented to royal intervention, and a decree of the court of Paris quashed the arbitration of S. Omer.

The
Valen-
ciennes
Question.

After so pitiable an exhibition of weakness, Philip might not unreasonably suppose that he could treat Guy as he pleased ; the wealthy burghers would not lift a hand to aid him, and the King of France might seem his only support. The Emperor Adolf of Nassau had begun his reign with a declaration that he would regain the imperial lands taken by France, especially Valenciennes. Now Valenciennes had recently expelled the soldiers of the Count of Hainault, and given itself up to the Count of Flanders. Thinking it unnecessary to regard the anger of Guy, Philip secured for himself an ally by declaring his intention to give Valenciennes back again to Hainault, and by holding out hopes that under the House of Avesnes both Flanders and Hainault would again be united. As Philip anticipated, Guy at first appeared impotent in his wrath : upon the Ghent magistrates alone could he vent his rage.

1294, Guy
turns to
England,

Some were imprisoned, the rest fled ; and for a time the town was without any municipal government. But desperation made the Count bold :

foreign allies must be sought if he was to withstand Philip, and Guy turned to England.

Relations between England and France had long been somewhat strained. The naval battle between the Norman and Cinque Ports mariners had given Philip a pretext for seizing Guienne. Edward therefore eagerly met Guy's overtures. The negotiations for a marriage, which had previously been suggested, between Prince Edward and Guy's daughter Philippina were renewed in earnest ; and in 1297 a secret treaty of marriage, including probably some provisions as to alliance, was concluded. With an utter disregard for honourable dealing, Philip, upon hearing of this, summoned Guy to Paris, ostensibly to take counsel with the other peers as to the state of the kingdom ; and, when he had got the unlucky Count into his power, imprisoned him in the Louvre on the charge of allying himself with the national enemy. For six months Guy remained in prison ; nor was he suffered to return to his county till he had sworn never to ally himself with England, and to entrust Philippina to the care of the French king, as a pledge of sincerity. Scarcely had he returned when, in 1295, on some petty pretext, the powers

and plans
a marriage
between
his
daughter
Philippina
and Prince
Edward.

Forced
by Philip
IV. to give
up this
project.

1295.
Temporary
reconciliation.

Philip
again
interferes
to protect
the
poorters,
and so
strengthens
their
pro-
French
feeling.

conferred by the treaty of Melun were invoked, and Flanders put under interdict. Already had the country been plundered in concert by king and Count: now Guy agreed that the king should levy a fifteenth on movables and immovables, himself to have half the proceeds; while Philip in return caused the interdict to be removed, and gave him permission to modify the constitution of Ghent as he pleased. Most of the Thirty-Nine again fled: those who remained were deprived of office and property. In their place Guy appointed magistrates more directly responsible to himself and with far less power. Fearing the same treatment, the rulers of the four other "good towns," Bruges, Ypres, Lille and Douai, joined Ghent in addressing a common petition to Philip: if he would give up the fifteenth, they would furnish him with a sum much larger than his half. Only too glad still further to weaken Guy, Philip consented; the Count found himself once more abandoned by his liege lord, and the French sympathies of the poorters, weakened by the king's recent action, were strengthened.

The refusal of Valenciennes to consent to its transfer to Hainault gave Philip a fresh opportunity.

Accusing Guy of complicity with its action he summoned him to Paris: the number of complaints addressed to Philip by the poorters of Ghent and Bruges concerning Guy's conduct showed the value of the king's recent concession. The royal court ordered the restitution of the seal and keys of Ghent. But it did not stop here: in token of utter submission, the Count had to place his towns in the hands of the king, receiving them back with a reservation on the part of Philip of his power of placing an agent in each to watch the course of affairs. Why the county was not at once taken possession of, it is difficult to say. Scarcely had Guy returned, when the seizure, ordered by the Count, of the goods of some merchants of Scotland, Philip's ally, furnished an excuse for the sentence of forfeiture.

The
county
declared
forfeited.

From this time there was no shuffling on either side. Isabella, the younger sister of Philippina, who had died in France, was betrothed to the Prince of Wales; and Edward promised speedy help. Guy renounced his allegiance to the King of France, and the county was again put under interdict. But Edward was unable to send aid: S. Omer and Cassel

War.

E

Defeat of
the Count
at
Bulscamp :
the
Leliaerts.

were taken, and the army of the Count was defeated at Bulscamp. In this engagement a large body of Flemish noblesse went over to the enemy, so that from the battle of Bulscamp begins the history of the Leliaerts, or friends of the lily, as a distinct political party. The landing of Edward with a small force scarcely delayed the process of conquest, and the truce which he made with Philip in 1297, confirmed by treaty two years later, deprived the Count of the last hope of assistance. The burgher aristocracy in all the towns admitted the French as soon as they could with safety do so,¹ and in 1300 the conquest was complete. Guy and his sons, who had gone to Paris to beg for mercy, were imprisoned ; and in May, 1301, Philip came to visit his new possession "as its new prince and immediate lord."²

All the
civic
magnates
declare for
Philip.
Flanders
completely
conquered
in 1300.

Philip's
triumphal
progress.

Of this and the next few years we have fortunately a picturesque and apparently truthful account in the annals of a certain Franciscan of Ghent, who began to write in 1308. It will be well to listen a while to the account he gives of the popular rising

¹ The Friar Minor of Ghent tells us, s.a. 1299, "*Brugenses majores omnes et de communitate aliqui valde erant contrarii comiti et filiis suis.*" *Corp. Chron. Fland.* i. 378.

² "*Tanquam novus princeps et immediatus dominus.*" *Ib.* 379.

preceding Courtray, as it forms the best possible introduction to the period of the Arteveldes. The ruling class in Ghent received the conqueror with great rejoicings, and the "scabini et majores" spent, the Friar assures us, 26,000 livres upon the new dresses worn by them at the festivities and in presents to Philip. "But when the king was entering Ghent, the commons cried out lustily, and prayed him to free them from a certain heavy exaction which there was at Ghent and Bruges, upon all things that were sold, and especially upon beer and hydromel, an exaction which the Gantois call 'mala pecunia,' the Brugeois 'assize.' The king granted the prayer of the clamourers, whereat the magnates of the city were much displeased, because they were wont to make much gain from the said exaction, as was also the case at Bruges."¹ In Bruges, therefore, the échevins and magnates forbade under penalty of death any cry for the abolition of the assize.

The king speedily returned to Paris, leaving a bailiff and a justiciar to represent him in each of the

¹ "Rex . . . annuit precibus acclamantium, quod majoribus villae multum displicuit, quia multa solebant de dicta exactione habere emolumenta, sicut et in Bruges." *Annales fratris minoris Gandavensis. Corp. Chron. Fl.* i. 380.

The
Matins of
Bruges.
Rising
under
Coninck ;

and in
Ghent,

chief towns. Almost immediately, upon an attempt of the magnates of Bruges to defray the expense of their state robes and presents to Philip by a tax on all the inhabitants, the craftsmen rose under "a certain weaver named Peter Coninck."¹ The first rising was unsuccessful, but shortly Coninck returned, and "became powerful among his fellow-craftsmen, the weavers, the fullers, and others of the commons, so that the bailiff of the king and his judge, the échevins, and many of the magnates, fearing for their heads, fled from the city."² The cause of the rising at Ghent was of exactly similar character. The "scabini et majores," for the same object, reimposed the maltôte abolished by the king, and proclaimed that all who opposed its payment would be executed or banished: "so those of the commons meeting one another, agreed to do no work on

¹ *Corp. Chr. Fl.* i. 380. "Quidam textor nomine Petrus cognomine Rex." The ascription of aristocratic birth to Coninck and Breydel is directly opposed to all contemporary evidence. Coninck is usually spoken of as "a certain weaver," and Breydel was dean of the butchers, and doubtless a butcher himself. Cf. Vanderk. *Sidde*, 150, n 1.

² "Apud textores suas et fullones et aliquos alios de communitate potens effectus est. . . . Ballivus regis et judex et scabini et multi de majoribus timentes suis capitibus etc." *Corp.* i. 382. Cf. Villani, viii., with whom it is a rising of the "popolo minuto" against the "gran borgesi."

the morrow,"¹ but to devote the day to discussing the situation. As in Bruges, the échevins and magnates fled.

The first measure of the commons of Ghent, now that they had gained the upper hand, was to send representatives to Bruges to propose a league against France in favour of the Count.² To this proposal Bruges was ready to accede; but, when the Ghent delegates returned, they found that the magnates had regained, if not the entire government of the city, at any rate control over its policy: "by the counsel and persuasion of some of the greater ones of the town, who were called Leliaerts (because the king bore lilies on his shield), and also of some of the rich men who feared the power of Philip and the loss of their wealth, the town determined to abide on the side of Philip." Yet, to retain the obedience of the town, the French king saw that some concessions to the popular desires were necessary.

but here
the
Leliaerts
regain
their
influence.

¹ "Illi de communitate mutuo sibi condixerunt quod in crastino nullum opus mechanicum exercerent sed otiantur et conferrent inter se." *Corp.* i. 383.

² "Aliqui de communitate Gandensi, favorabiles comiti et proli suae venerunt Brugas pro facienda colligatione inter communitatem Brugensem et Gandensem ad resistendum regiae potestati. Ad quam colligationem Brugesenses multos voluntarios invenerunt." *Ib.* 384.

“Jacques de S. Pol and Pierre de Flotte, the king’s representatives, consented to all things the commonalty requested, lest the Gantois should rebel against the king as the Brugeois had done. Then the constitution of Ghent was changed: hitherto there had been thirty-nine échevins of the greater and more noble sort, who much oppressed the commons.”¹ What exactly the change was, is difficult to determine. Apparently for the old system of co-optation was substituted indirect election. The citizens were to choose four electors every year, the prince four others; these eight were to name the twenty-six échevins, divided into two benches, “the Échevins of the Keure,” to whom was intrusted the general administration, and “the Parchons” who had jurisdiction over matters of inheritance and wardship, and acted as arbitrators in private quarrels. But the lists of échevins for the next thirty years show conclusively that, however the theory might be changed, the government was still monopolised

Philip
forced to
make
conces-
sions.

The
Thirty-
Nine
superseded
by
Twenty-
Six
échevins,
nominated
by
electors,
chosen
equally by
Prince
and
citizens.

¹ “Tunc politia vel civitas Gandensis mutata est. A longis enim temporibus fuerant in ea xxxix scabini de majoribus et melioribus qui communitatem valde deprimebant. . . . Sed modo ad petitionem communitatis ab ipsa et de ipsa parte regis xiii. scabini electi sunt.” Cf. Vanderk. *Siecle*, 71, and K. de Lettenhove.

by the great families. The close oligarchy of the Thirty-Nine had fallen; but the advantage was not with the craftsmen, but with the "bonnes gens," the substantial folk.

Increased power of the "bonnes gens," but the great families retain a monopoly of office.

While Philip was thus endeavouring to conciliate the people of Ghent, Guy of Namur, a younger son of the imprisoned Count, had taken command of the army of Brugeois, and was reconquering the open country. Everywhere they were welcomed by "the vulgar, who were oppressed by the French and the Leliaerts, and almost reduced to slavery."¹ Ypres and the other towns surrendered; Ghent alone remained firm to the king, "by the influence," says the Friar "of the Leliaerts, although almost the whole of the commonalty were in favour of the Count."²

The great defeat at Courtray taught Philip that it was not so easy a matter to conquer Flanders as he had anticipated. "There all the noblesse of the world lay low," says a contemporary;³ as for

1302. Courtray, victory of the artisans.

¹ "Adhaerentibus libentissime et toto corde omnibus vulgaribus, qui a Francis et Leliardis suis oppressi et quasi ad servitutem redacti sunt."

Corp. i. 388.

² *Ib.* 389.

³ *Chronique de Flandre* (ed. Acad. Royale de Bruxelles), 234.

the French infantry, for them the well-fed and disciplined Flemings cared little.¹ The true character of the struggle is revealed by the jubilant record of the Friar of Ghent: "Thus, by the ordinance of God, fell the flower of chivalry before the weavers, fullers, and commons of Flanders."² That Guy of Namur knew to whom the victory was due, is shown by his knighting on the field of battle "Peter Coninck, the weaver, and many others of whom one could scarcely have expected that so it would have fallen out to them."³

The citizens were naturally inspired by their victory to demand a share in their own government. But no offer of concession came from the ruling class; so, in 1303, the craftsmen of Ypres rose, killed several échevins and wealthier citizens, and forced heavy contributions from the rich. Philip of

¹ "Pedites . . . quorum numerus in pugna sequenti et aliis proeliis a me non ponitur, quia Flandrenses, homines fortes et bene nutriti, de peditibus Francorum quasi non curant." *Corp.* i. 384.

² "Sicque, Deo disponente omnia et ordinante, coram textoribus fullonibus et vulgaribus Flamingis . . . corrui ars pugnae, flos militiae cum electissimorum et dextrariorum fortitudine; et pulchritudo et potentia validissimi exercitus conversa est in sterquilinum, facta est ibi Francorum stercus et vermis." *Ib.* 391.

³ *Ib.* 392.

Thiette, who was now governing the county in the name of his father, seemed at first ready to grant their demands, and allowed them to choose échevins from their own class. But, when order had been restored, Guy, hoping to win the town aristocracy, withdrew all concessions, invoking the authority of the échevins of the four other "good towns," and executed the leaders of the revolt.¹ It is true that, in a charter granted to Bruges in the following year, Peter of Thiette ordained that of the thirteen échevins nine should be chosen by the artisans,—*i.e.* one for each of the nine members into which the guilds were divided,²—and four only by the poorters, of the councillors nine by the artisans, four by the échevins and the nine artisan-councillors already elected. But this arrangement, by which the crafts would have gained almost complete control of the administration, was probably never carried out; the document, still extant, is marked "null."³

Yet they
fail to
obtain
political
rights.

¹ Vanderk. *Sizcle*, 152.

² *Ib.* 192-3.

³ *Ib.* 153. It is probable, however, that in the enthusiasm of the popular rising, a few artisans were elected échevins, for the Friar says, "In Brugis etiam scabini et rectores de communitate positi sunt." *u.s.* 388.

Reaction. The reaction had indeed already begun. Philip had raised another great army, but at Mont-en-Pévèle, if the Flemings were not victorious, they were, at any rate, able to hold their own. If, however, Philip could not defeat them on the field, he could defeat them with the weapons of diplomacy. Why he should have dared to offer such terms as he did, and why they should for an instant have been accepted, seems almost inexplicable. Flemish historians, who look upon the contest as simply a struggle to maintain the independence of Flanders, are unable to give any reason save the cunning of the French king. In the relations of the different classes, the explanation may possibly be found. Of the rural noblesse the majority were Leliaerts; they expected greater freedom of action under a distant king than under a near and powerful Count: many of those still faithful to Guy were in prison with him. It was upon the craftsmen alone that the Count's representatives could rely; how entirely they could be trusted was shown by the enthusiastic welcome they gave to the aged Guy on his return from captivity: "all the people received him with great gladness, many weeping for

Philip's
action
explained
by the
relations of
classes.

joy.”¹ But their just demands had met with no favour from the sons of the Count ; their enemies at Bruges and Ypres had even been aided to regain power. And, finally, the town aristocracy were, in spite of all that had been done to win them, at heart adherents of the French king. With most of the noblesse and all the richer citizens opposed to him, and the craftsmen dispirited, no wonder that Robert of Bethune, who had now succeeded Guy in the county, should have consented to the “Iniquitous Treaty” of 1305 in order to gain his liberty. Had this been carried out, Philip would have become absolute master of Flanders, and the Count would have found himself bound hand and foot. Fealty was to be sworn by Robert, by the nobles, and by the towns, and the oath was to be repeated in future by all communal officers on their election ; a huge sum at once as a fine, and a very large annual tribute were to be paid to the French king ; the county was to be rendered defenceless by the immediate demolition of the town fortifications ; and, besides the towns and châtellenies of Lille Douai and Bethune, already held by the king, Cassel and Courtray were to

1305.
The
Iniquitous
Treaty (of
Athies).

¹ Vanderk. *Siccle*, 404.

Success of
the policy
of the
Treaty of
Melun.

be surrendered as pledges for the execution of the treaty.¹ The policy of which the first traces are seen in the treaty of Melun, eighty years before, had thus been completely successful: the king had possession of the whole of Walloon Flanders, and a considerable piece of Flemish-speaking country was demanded in addition. An outburst of indignation greeted the publication of the terms of the treaty. Robert of Bethune, prematurely old, and anxious for peace, was forced to yield to the outcry, and negotiations were renewed. In 1309 the delegates of all the towns, except Bruges which was unrepresented, were induced to confirm the original provisions at Paris. The "maiores et ditiores" of Ghent, the class to which the ambassadors to Paris belonged, consented thereto, says the Friar, "but the commonalty were silent and dissembled, wishing to know how matters would turn out at Bruges. There also the magnates were willing to consent; but under the leadership of Coninck, once weaver now knight,

Opposition
of the
"vulgar
mechanics."

¹ For a suggestive, though rather hysterical, estimate of the Treaty of Athies, v. Lenz's article, "Le traité des Quatre-Vingts Articles, dit traité d'iniquité de l'an cinq," in *Nouvelles Archives Historiques*, ii. 109. Cf. Wenzelburger, *Gesch. d. Niederlande* (Heeren-Uk. Europ. Staat.) i. 246; and Lettenhove.

Breydel the butcher, and Heine the fuller, all the weavers and fullers, and all the other common mechanics rejected the treaty, especially since they saw the alliance against them, of princes and knights, of noble squires and magnates, and of the wealthy citizens in all the towns."¹ Philip felt it was useless to attempt coercion, and withdrew the articles which required the demolition of the fortresses and the surrender of Courtray and Cassel. Very little of the tribute was ever paid, though the French king gratified his vanity by keeping a careful account of the arrears. The various treaties which were made were in reality little better than truces, and, as has been well said,² it was not till James van Artevelde forced the king to surrender his claims, that this *statu quo* of more than thirty years was terminated.

Robert of Bethune seemed ready to acquiesce in whatever terms Philip might impose; Louis de Nevers, his eldest son, was not at first inclined to

¹ "Sed Petrus Rex cum omnibus textoribus, fullonibus et rasoribus pannorum, et alii omnes mechanici vulgares, timentes pellibus suis considerantes etiam principum et militum et nobilium armigerorum et majorum et ditiorum in omnibus villis adversus se concordiam," etc. *Corp.* i. 433.

² Lenz, *ub. sup.* ii. 117.

When
Louis de
Nevers
resists,
Philip
appeals to
the
town
magnates.

bear the yoke so lightly. But when he attempted to take up a position of independence, Philip turned to the magnates of the towns : if any of them should be wrongfully treated by the Count, it was the King of France who would defend them ; it was not the good folk of Flanders who rebelled against their liege lord, but the Count, and they must remember that mightier princes, the Duke of Normandy, and the Count of Toulouse, had been brought low and deprived of their states. The king found it easy to seize Louis, and then had no difficulty in making Robert confirm the previous treaties. Louis contrived to escape, and the whole country was again in arms, but the seizure of the Flemish merchants by Edward II. at Philip's request, and the stopping of the supply of wool from England brought the Flemings to their knees. In 1313, by the treaty of Arras, they accepted the terms they had before rejected, consented to destroy the town fortifications, and to give up Courtray as a pledge.

Sub-
mission of
Flanders
gained by
stopping
English
wool-
supply.
1313.
Treaty of
Arras.
Courtray
to be given
up and
town
fortifica-
tions
destroyed.

An attempt on the part of Louis to prevent the execution of the treaty caused Flanders to be put under interdict, and led to a renewal of the war. But on the death of Philip, and the succession of

Renewal
of war.

Louis Hutin, Louis de Nevers, to the astonishment of the whole world, went to Paris [1315], and, in return for a promise that, if he died before his father, his son should inherit Flanders, he bound himself to carry out the treaties of the last ten years as far as possible. Never afterwards did he leave the French court. The motives for such a step must indeed have been powerful. Like his father before him prematurely old, he was anxious to secure the county for his son. To this end he must obtain the support of his lord, for the right of representation had never yet been admitted in Flanders,¹ and the claims of Robert of Cassel, his brother, were supported by a powerful party. Whatever the motives may have been, the treaty of 1315 was a turning-point in the history of the house of Dampierre. Up to this time, the Counts had at least been consistent in their antagonism to the King of France; they had shown some faint perception of the value of the popular support against the town oligarchies, and therefore against their suzerain. A wise prince would have supported the party of the artisans, and might have strengthened his own power, by giving them the

Suspended
by the
death of
Philip.
1315.
Treaty of
Paris.
Louis de
Nevers
promises
to observe
recent
treaties.

Turning-
point in
the
history of
the house
of
Dampier-
erre.

¹ Gilliodts, *Études*, 459.

rights which they demanded. But, henceforth, the Counts of Flanders become the despised satellites of the court of Paris, ready to bear any burdens that might be thrust upon them. The founder of the Dampierre line had been a noble of Champagne, whom Louis VIII. had compelled the Countess Margaret to accept for her husband; the possession of the peaceful counties of Nevers and Rethel, so different from the turbulent Flanders, and so easily overrun by the royal troops, tended to keep his descendants French in feeling, and rendered them indisposed to assert their independence. Hitherto the artisans could, at any rate occasionally, look for the support of their prince against a common enemy. But now the Count had gone over to their foes, and the craftsmen were left to fight unaided alike for political power and for the independence of the county.

The
Counts
increasing-
ly de-
pendent on
the French
king.

Hence-
forth the
craftsmen
fight
unaided
for
political
rights and
Flemish
independ-
ence.

Of the tedious troubles, the wars and interdicts, which followed, it is unnecessary to give details: they resulted in the signing by Robert of Bethune in 1320 of a treaty wherein he bound himself never to claim Lille, Douai and Bethune. Shortly afterwards, Louis de Crecy, the eldest son of Louis de Nevers, married Margaret of France, the daughter of Philip

the Long ; two years later, Count Robert and his son Louis de Nevers died.

The eagerness with which the Flemish towns invited the young heir to receive their homage must have been an unwelcome surprise to the French king. He took advantage of Louis de Crecy's youth to exact from him, before he would grant him investiture, a promise to intrust the government to councillors whom the king himself should nominate. As his first ministers Charles le Bel chose the Bishop of Arras and the Abbot of Vezelai, the son of that Peter Flotte who had been the agent of Philip IV. From the first, Louis de Crecy showed himself the devoted vassal of the French king ; advised by French councillors, French himself in manners and language, he had little sympathy with his subjects, and continually irritated them by indiscreet measures. But no serious trouble arose till the great outbreak among the peasantry in the Franc of Bruges [1324], soon extending to the whole of Western Flanders. The immediate cause of the rebellion is said to have been the unjust assessment, "not in proportion to their property, but at the will of the échevins and

1322.
Accession
of Louis
(de Crecy)
under the
tutelage of
the French
king.

1324.
Agrarian
rising in
Western
Flanders.

Bruges
craftsmen
fraternise
with the
insurgent
peasants.

castellans,"¹ of a certain grant made to the Count by the towns and châtellemies. But at bottom it was an agrarian revolt caused by the oppression of the feudal lords and échevins ; it is marked throughout by the destruction of castles,² "for they thought it was not good that the nobles should have fortified houses, and live among them ;"³ and when Louis attempted to restore order by pardoning what had been done, he recognised that "some nobles, and others not nobles, have committed many great and secret crimes."⁴ The artisans of Bruges soon joined the movement, for, as a contemporary says somewhat awkwardly, "the people being continually mixed with the people, become one people ;"⁵ under Jansson and Zannequin they conquered the greater part of the county, everywhere welcomed by the artisans and peasants "as angels of God." Courtray,

¹ *Chron. Comitum Flandriae, Corp.* i. 187.

² "Fugientum dominorum domos destruebant. Tantus et tam periculosus factus est tumultus quod talis a seculis non est auditus, et qui vidit haec, scripsit ea fideliter." *Ib.* "Populares ceperunt mansiones nobilium frangere," and many other passages.

³ " . . . non esse bonum nobiles inter ipsos mansiones habere fortes et cum eis habitare." *Ib.* 188. Cf. Wenzelburger, i. 247.

⁴ Gilliodts, *Invent. Brug.* i. 346.

⁵ *Corp.* i. 189. Cf. "Communi populo prodente majores," etc,

offended by the high-handed conduct of the Count, delivered him to the Brugeois, and joined the alliance.

One great town alone remained firm, Ghent. It has hitherto been usual to ascribe the action of Ghent and Bruges, when they are found fighting on opposite sides, to mutual jealousy. Probably this was not absent. But it is more important to remember that in Ghent the burgher aristocracy had maintained their power undiminished since the time when the town, five and twenty years before, had remained the firm ally of Philip the Fair. A rising of some of the crafts in 1313 had been suppressed, and at this period the weavers were not only subjected to a heavy weekly tax, but were even deprived of their dean.¹ It is not difficult, therefore, to understand that, when the Ghent magistracy put a great army in the field, it was not so much from mere local jealousy, of which none of the chroniclers speak, as to deliver the Count, the representative of that French alliance to which they clung, and to put down a democratic movement which might prove dangerous to themselves. But at Deinse, 1325, they were entirely defeated, and the Brugeois would not

Ghent alone supports the Count; probably because power of oligarchy undiminished:

but the Gantois are defeated at Deinse, 1325.

¹ Vanderk. *Siecle*, 156-7.

allow Louis to return to Paris till he had sworn (Feb. 1326) to pardon their conduct, and do all in his power to bring about peace. Charles le Bel was not ready for war, so the treaty of Arques was agreed to.

1326.
Treaty of
Arques.

The towns were no longer to retain their captains, and the arrears of tribute for the last twenty years were to be paid. Such a treaty was of course only a temporary expedient; it was not observed, and Count Louis was eagerly waiting for his revenge.

1328.
Accession
of Philip
of Valois.

The accession of the brilliant pseudo-chivalric Philip of Valois gave him what he wanted. At the coronation at Rheims, it was his duty to bear the sword of the kingdom. He returned no answer to the herald's cry, "Count of Flanders;" had he been called "Count of Nevers," he explained, he would have replied, but of Flanders he was only Count in name, for he had

Scene at
the
corona-
tion.

been driven from his land by the citizens of Bruges, Ypres, Poperinghe and Cassel. Then King Philip swore by the holy oil which had that day fallen upon his brow, that he would not enter Paris before he had established Louis in the peaceful possession of his dominions.¹

He was true to his word: at the head of a great

¹ *Chron. de Flan.* i. 357.

army he marched into the county, and inflicted a crushing defeat on the artisans at Cassel. The victory of the Count was followed everywhere by severe repressive measures. Philip took back hundreds of hostages with him into France, and advised Louis to execute justice rigorously upon the rebels, for if he came again it must be for his own profit, and not that of the Count. The first movement had come from the open country, especially the Franc of Bruges: the victory of Cassel was followed by the destruction of many villages, by the restoration of the lords with more than their former power, and by wholesale executions. Henceforth the influence of the petty noblesse was dominant in the Franc, which became the stronghold of feudal ideas and institutions. The importance of this will be seen later.

1328.
Cassel.

Repressive
measures.

The Franc
henceforth
the
stronghold
of
feudalism.

Moreover the privileges conferred on many of the towns by charter were lessened; at Bruges the constitution of 1190 was to be restored.¹ But it was against the artisans that measures of precaution were most carefully taken. Five hundred weavers and a like number of fullers are said to have been

¹ Vanderk. *Siècle*, 155-6, 272.

Craft-
guilds
deprived
of their
officers.

banished from Ypres ; the guilds were deprived of their officers, and "the common people who had no heritage or house in the town" were disarmed. At Bruges "no captains, deans, syndics, or other leaders whatever they might be called," were for the future to be chosen "upon pain of incurring the anger of the king's majesty."¹ The guarantee demanded so

Town
fortifica-
tions to be
destroyed.

often by the French king—that the town-fortifications should be destroyed—was at last gained by him, and the walls were actually thrown down at Bruges.² But what marks more than anything else the bitterness of the struggle is the bloody vengeance taken upon individuals. More than ten thousand persons are said to have been executed in less than three months.³ Bruges, which had so readily welcomed the insurgents, was treated with especial rigour ; it was divided into six sections, and a minute inquiry was in turn made in each, as to those implicated in the rising. At Ghent the magistrates were only too glad to assist in punishing their enemies, and joined the Count in requesting the Count of Holland to

¹ Gilliodts, *Inventaire des Archives de Bruges*, i. n. 325.

² *Ib.* 402.

³ Contin. W. Nangis, s. a. 1328.

arrest those refugees who had conspired against their lord or their town.¹ Jannson and the burgomaster of Bruges were broken on the wheel and torn by horses at Paris. Citizens and artisans were not deemed in the fourteenth century honourable antagonists, to whom mercy might be extended. All means, treachery and falsehood, were considered fair when used against them; they seem to have been regarded as wild beasts which might be snared without scruple.

Character
of the
struggle.

¹ The letter was followed by a list of some 630 names; given in Dayse. *Invent. Gand.* 118.

II.

THE WORK OF LIBERATION. THE ENGLISH ALLIANCE.

“ Toutes Flandres est fondée sur draperie, et sans laine on ne puet draper.” Speech attributed to James van Artevelde.—*Chron. of S. Denis.*

SUCH had been the previous history of Flanders, and such was its condition immediately before the appearance of James van Artevelde. The artisans had again been crushed ; the towns in which they had gained the upper hand had been treated with ruthless severity. The Count could apparently rule as he pleased, and seemed contented with his entire dependence on France. But when the Hundred Years' war began, when obedience to their lord meant starvation for the great mass of the people, they again found strength to rebel and a leader who could give them food and liberty.

Hitherto we have been considering the history of the whole county : henceforward it will be necessary to fix our attention chiefly upon Ghent, the home of the two Arteveldes and the source of their strength. Ghent was at this time probably the most populous and wealthy city in Europe. The Schelde and Lys carried to it the corn of Picardy and Artois, and it was within easy distance of Bruges, whither the wool, the raw material of its industry, was brought direct from England. The exercise of power remained in fact, if not in theory, in the hands of the great families : each of the more powerful magnates gained the office of *échevin* every three or four years.¹ But the lessons of recent events had not been wasted on them : they deemed it necessary, if not to give a share in their own government to all the artisans, to strengthen their own position by conciliating the less dangerous. More than one third of the craftsmen belonged to the weavers' guild ; the rest were perhaps equally divided between the fullers' guild and the lesser crafts. Hitherto, in the struggle against the *poorters*, the artisans had been united. But with

Ghent.

Rivalry
between
weavers
and
fullers.

¹ *E.g.* Maes van Vaernewyck in 1321, 1324, 1327, 1330, 1337. Jan Masch, 1328, 1331, 1334. Vanderk. *Siecle*, 71, n 3.

1325.
The
magnates
strengthen
themselves
against the
weavers by
giving a
share in
political
power to
fullers and
small
crafts.

the increase of trade quarrels seem to have arisen between the fullers and weavers as to the proportion each should have of the profits. From about 1330 we have to take into account, as an important factor in Flemish politics, a constant jealousy between the two crafts, breaking out occasionally into open strife. The weavers were the more feared by the rulers; they were probably the more intelligent, and it was by them that the struggle had everywhere been commenced. They would have a better chance of maintaining their own position, the magnates seem to have thought, if they could gain the alliance of the fullers, and of the smaller guilds who felt themselves cast into the shade by the prominence of the great craft; so that, while during the years 1325-1337, as before mentioned, severe measures of repression were directed against the weavers, and they were even deprived of their dean, we find the fullers and the smaller guilds incorporated into the municipal organisation. In 1325 the city pays a salary for the first time to the dean of the fullers' and to the dean of the small guilds.¹ Separately

¹ "Den here J. den Temmerman deken van den volres 20 ll gr: Ph. Deynote deken van de cleenen ambachten 10 ll gr." *ib.* 159, n 1.

the lesser trades would have been powerless: combined under one head they become a formidable body, a counterpoise to either the fullers or the weavers. In the next year a similar payment is made to the "Deken van den ledichganghers;" that is the poorters, the "bourgeois heritables," appear as a corporate body.¹ It is impossible to say whether this is merely the bringing into new prominence of the head of the "Commans gulde," or whether, the merchant guild having long ago disappeared, this date marks its revival in a new form. The latter conjecture is probably nearer the truth. Although a measure doubtless designed primarily to strengthen the position of the ruling class, the coordination of more than half the artisans with the poorters is a distinct mark of the progress which the democratic tendencies had made. By the ruling class itself had the precedent been given for the admission of the artisans to a share in self-government, and the outline had been sketched of that division into "the three members" which James van Artevelde afterwards perfected.

Deken
van den
ledich-
ganghers.

Step
towards
Artevelde's
division
into three
members.

¹ In the draft accounts "dekan van den ledichganghers"; in the final form, "*dekan van den porters die van ghenen ambachte sijn*," i.e. dean of the burghers who are of no trade. Pauw. *Consp. d'Auden*, xxi.

1333.
Renewed
attack of
the Count
on the
échevins,—
disposes
the ruling
class to
acquiesce
in the sub-
sequent
popular
movement.

This alliance had lasted some few years and Ghent had enjoyed a short period of comparative quiet, when Louis de Crecy, in 1333, renewed the war which his predecessors had waged with the magistrates. The charges were much the same as those urged before, but the state of affairs had entirely altered. Count Louis was now the firm ally of the French king, and the échevins could no longer turn to Paris for support. They must therefore trust to the support of the populace; so that this brief contest did probably more than has been suspected to prepare the way for the Captain of St. John, and incline many of the ruling class to submit to his guidance. A more convenient place will be found later for describing how, owing to the weakness of the princely authority, the great cities were gradually becoming the governors of the surrounding country. It is of this, and of the diminution in Ghent itself of the power of his Bailli that the Count complains.¹ The échevins, he says, assume to themselves cognisance of criminal matters in the districts of Waes and the Quatre-Metiers; the judicial rights of the Count are disregarded in

¹ Lettenhove's Monograph, *Jacques d'Artevelde*, 29-31.

their proceedings, and the action of the Bailli is hindered. They raise taxes without his consent, and keep their captains and deans in spite of the treaty of Arques—the mention of the deans not improbably referring to the recent partial recognition of the guild organisation. Two years later the Count attempted, as he had so often attempted before, to establish a control over the municipal expenditure; in August 1335, the Bailli summoned the échevins to present at once their accounts for the past year. Not daring so soon after Cassel to refuse point-blank, the échevins agreed to refer the matter to the arbitration of the Bishop of Tournay. His decision was entirely favourable to the Count; the échevins were pronounced in the wrong on all points; and it is curious to mark as a sign that the prince had not yet forgotten his old alliance with the artisans that the échevins were forbidden to raise, as they had been wont, a tax of an “esterlin” from each weaver. Ultimately the matter was compromised, and it was agreed that, in return for a payment of 30,000 livres, the échevins should have liberty to levy taxes for the next fifteen years, “the ambassadors of the town asking pardon for their offences on bended knees.”

The
Anglo-
French
War.

Before many months had passed, all these petty quarrels were forgotten. Preparations were being made in good earnest for the war between Edward of England and Philip of Valois; even if the Count could have disregarded his duty as a vassal, gratitude must have led him to adopt the French cause. Froissart says truly, "He was a good and loyal Frenchman, and greatly loved King Philip, for which he had much reason, for it was the king who had restored him by force to his county."¹

The
Count "a
good
French-
man."

¹ MS. Amiens (Lettenhove's *Froiss.* ii. 361.) Of Froissart, who will be our most continuous authority, there are three versions (v. Luce's ed. for *Soc. Hist. France*, i.).

1st. (About 50 MSS.) copied almost verbally from Jehan le Bel.

2nd. (Amiens and Valenciennes MSS.), for the period 1345-56 much like Jehan le Bel, because both narratives derived from the same source, the accounts of John of Hainault; but generally the 50 above mentioned are nearer Jehan le Bel.

3rd. Rome MS., ending 1350.

Luce, lxii.: "Le récit relatif à l'élévation de Jacques d'Artevelde et à la révolte des Flamands offre en petit une image exacte de la manière dont Fr. a procédé dans ses trois rédactions. Dans la première il se contente de reproduire littéralement le text de Jehan le Bel. Dans la seconde, il conserve encore le version hostile et partielle du chanoine de Liège, mais il y ajoute d'importants développements où les causes économiques des troubles de Flandre sont exposées avec plus d'impartialité . . . enfin dans la troisième rédaction le chanoine de Chimay supprime entièrement . . . le passage empruntée à Jehan le Bel pour y substituer des détails entièrement originaux [and, it may be added, often equally imaginative], et une appréciation vraiment

In the autumn of 1336, Louis ordered the seizure of all the English merchants in Flanders; whereupon, on October 5th, a like seizure was made of Flemish merchants in England, and the exportation of wool was forbidden. If considerable quantities of wool had ever been obtained from the Cistercian houses in Champagne, that supply must before this time have ceased, for all contemporary writers speak as though England were the only source for the raw material. Hitherto there had never been a total prohibition of the export of wool; the worst inconvenience that had previously been suffered was a longer journey—to some town in Holland or Brabant, whither the staple had been removed, instead of to Bruges. But now it could not even be obtained through an intermediary: the prohibition was absolute. What the result must have been is at once seen. In a few weeks the existing stores of material were worked up, and the craftsmen were thrown out of work; when the small savings in

1336.
Seizure of
English
merchants
in
Flanders.

Edward
therefore
forbids
export of
English
wool.

Wool
famine.

personnelle; il y appelle J. d'A. 'hauster homme, sage et soutil durement.'"

The value of Lettenhove's edition is lessened by his adoption of the Amiens MS. as the basis, and the incomplete manner in which the Rome MS. was copied.

Con-
sequent
misery.

the guild chests were exhausted, the great mass of the people were destitute. In all the large towns there was a like state of things. The streets were soon crowded with unemployed artisans; "many of the honest folk of the county of Flanders," says Froissart, "went in search of employment to Hainault, Artois, and Cambresis, and, unable to procure it, were forced to beg their bread."¹ From France indeed they might get corn, but, the Gantois remonstrated, how were they to pay for it now that their manufactures were destroyed?

1337.
April.
Alliance
between
the towns
of
Flanders
Brabant
and
Hainault.

Numerous "parliaments" of the delegates of the towns were held, but without any result. Determined that they would not be isolated from the neighbouring states of the Low Countries whatever might be the policy of the Count, the "good towns" on the first day of April 1337, signed a convention with the towns of Brabant and Hainault, wherein

¹ MS. Amiens, ed. Lettenhove, ii. 362. Cf. *Chron. Comit. Flandr. Corp.* i. 209: "Claudentur passus . . . depauperantur viciniae, et Flandria praecipue, quae de mercantiis et beneficiis lanarum est solita sustentari. Tunc vidissetis textores, fullones et tinctorum et alios artifices gregatim panem suam seu victum quotidianum per Flandriam mendicando quaerere," etc.

they bound themselves not to make war save by common consent, and to settle disputes which might arise between citizens of different states by a council of arbitration chosen from the good towns of the three provinces.

In the middle of March Edward III. had despatched the Bishop of Lincoln and the Earls of Salisbury and Huntingdon to Flanders to negotiate an alliance. At Ghent they were well received: the recent attack upon their privileges had alienated from the Count the ruling class who had so long defended him against the Brugeois, and the "knight-banneret" Sohier of Courtray, a citizen of Ghent, and hitherto a firm adherent of the Count, received them in his hostel. Of the negotiations we know little. Edward of course asked their active support, or, if that was not to be obtained, that they would remain neutral; and he is said to have suggested a marriage between one of his daughters and a son of the Count. Nothing however was done. The ambassadors had scarcely left Flanders for Hainault before Sohier, who had been summoned by the Count to a parliament at Bruges, was arrested at the command of Philip of Valois, as guilty of

Edward's
am-
bassadors
enter-
tained at
Ghent by
Sohier of
Courtray
but no
treaty
made.

Arrest of
Sohier

still
further
alienates
the
wealthier
citizens
from the
Count.

treason.¹ All contemporary writers describe the fate of "the Courtroisien," as a matter of great importance: the consequence of his arrest seems to have been that the wealthier citizens, to many of whom he was related, were driven into an attitude of still greater hostility to the Count and to Philip.

August.
Con-
cessions of
Philip.

The French king soon became aware that the good towns of Flanders might declare for his enemy, and impressed upon his obedient vassal the necessity of securing their fidelity.² The Count thereupon hastened from town to town urging them to remain faithful to their liege lord, while Philip forgave them certain old debts dating from 1310, remitted two years' tribute and half that of the current year. They were moreover for the future to enjoy the monopoly of French wool—a concession scarcely worth having. A few days later

¹ " . . . se fist prendre un chevalier de Flandres qu'on appeloit Courtroisien, de qui ceulx de Flandres se courrouchièrent si qu'il dirent que jamais n'entreroient en parlement se li chevaliers ne leur estoit rendus. Mais le contes qui ceste chose avoit faite par le commandement du roy de France, luy fist copper la teste pour ce que on luy mettoit sur qu'il avoit receu les deniers du roy d'Engleterre." *Chron. de Flan.* ed. Lett. i. 362. Cf. Jehan le Bel, i. 132; Froiss. ed. Lettenh. ii. 378

² Froiss. Amiens MS. ed. Lett. ii. 361.

the Brugeois were allowed again to dig out their moat, on the pretext that the filling it up had spoilt the water used for making beer.¹ In November the English landed at Cadsand and defeated the Bastard of Flanders. Philip was in consequence obliged to make still further concessions to retain the friendship of Bruges. It was now graciously permitted to raise its ramparts, necessary, said the royal writ, as a defence against the enemies of the kingdom;² and very shortly the rest of the year's tribute was remitted.

November.
English
victory at
Cadsand.

It is not easy to explain why all this while, though Bruges, which had been the first to receive Zannequin and the insurgents of 1324, was granted all its requests, Ghent was allowed to become more and more hostile. Perhaps, as the "meliores" had ever been firm allies of France, and had maintained their power even during the revolutionary times before the battle of Cassel, it was thought that Ghent would not declare against the king. Possibly a truer instinct suggested that Bruges was easier to gain, since as a trading town it did not suffer so much as Ghent from the cessation of the

Probable
policy of
Philip in
con-
ciliating
Bruges
while
neglecting
Ghent.

¹ Gilliodts, *Invent. Bruges*, i. 480.

² *Ib.* 482

woollen manufacture, and Philip may have hoped to hold the one in subjection by the aid of the other.

Agitation
at Ghent.

For fifteen months no wool had come from England to Ghent. In the cry of the starving weavers, "Liberty and Work,"¹ were summed up the needs of the town—restoration of intercourse with England and freedom from the despotism of Count and King. A rumour spread that a certain rich citizen, James van Artevelde, had said that if he were listened to he would relieve them of their difficulties. It was the day after Christmas when, if we may trust Froissart,² whose narrative has been borrowed by most modern historians, a crowd of craftsmen went off to ask his advice. They found him leaning against the door of his house.³ "We have been told, sir, that you know how to restore Flanders to prosperity. You would do us a charity

Dec. 26.
The
artisans
seek the
advice of
Artevelde.

¹ Vriheden ende Neeringhen.

² MS. Amiens, ed. Letten. ii. 411-2; "espécialement petites gens et communes asquels li meschies touchoit li plus."

³ Diericx. *Mem. sur la ville de Gand*. ii. 44, says, "Si de la place *den calander-berg*, nous passons dans la rue nommée le coin des crapauds *den padden-hoek*, nous arrivons à l'endroit où demouroit A. : il paroît que sa maison étoit la seconde à droit." The house, No. 9, Place de la Calendre, which is now marked by a memorial tablet, is, however, separated by several houses from the corner of the Paddenhoek, a narrow street opening into the Place.

if you would tell us how." To his question, "Will you swear to aid me to the death?" they all with one voice shouted "Yea," whereupon he bade them meet him next day in the meadows of the monastery called the Biloke, just outside the town and let everybody know of the meeting.

As to the position of Artevelde and his family, a long war has been waged among the modern historians and antiquaries of Belgium. All parties have agreed in considering him a Belgian hero,¹ but while the Right have claimed for his family a place among the highest feudal nobility, the Left consider them to have been at most "wealthy drapers." The vigorous polemics of the two schools are not a little amusing. According to Baron Kervyn de Lettenhove, the Artevelde's were the lineal descendants of the ancient castellans of Ghent, and even if this ancestry be denied, "Artevelde's escutcheon of sable with three chaplets of silver will remain."² On the other hand, the fiery Gilliodts

Position of
Artevelde.

The Great
Noble and
the
Working
Man
theories.

¹ In recent times M. de Gerlache has been almost alone in maintaining that A. was only "a terrible popular dictator," who gave unrestrained power to the democracy, and one of the most active causes of the subsequent troubles of Flanders. *Bulls. de l'Acad. Brux.* 1856, i. 307 seq.

² *Hist. de Flandre* (ed. 1847) iii. 178.

van Severen, the present archivist of Bruges, has declared: "It is in vain that people have searched the obscure records of chapters to assign to the blood of Artevelde a noble or feudal source. Whatever they may do, Jacques d'Artevelde will none the less remain the dean of the weavers . . . and all these party efforts to gain him as their own will only add to his fame."¹

The
poorter
family of
cloth
merchants
in
S. John's
Parish,
not within
the circle
of ruling
families.

Neither of the extreme theories adequately explains Artevelde's career. One is therefore emboldened to propose another view—not entirely new, for it was suggested by Moke forty years ago,²—which seems more consistent with his after action. In the parish of S. John there appears to have been a well-to-do family of cloth merchants³ of this name, not however of the highest rank, for but one member thereof appears in the lists of échevins.⁴

¹ *Études*, 496. He calls A. "homme du peuple," and the like.

² *Revue Nationale*, iv.

³ Lett. Froiss. ii. 534. J. d'A. 12. Several members of the Artevelde family are mentioned in the "Liber Obitalis" of the parish of S. John. "Guillaume d'Artevelde et sa femme Catherine ont fait des dons assez considérables à l'église de S. Jean pour que leur obit soit célèbre par le curé assisté d'un diacre et d'un sous-diacre."

⁴ Jan van Artevelde échevin in 1321, 1325 and 1328 (v. L'Espinoy), is supposed to have been the father of James.

In the language of the fourteenth century it might be said that they were poorters, "bourgeois héréditaires," but did not belong to a "grand lignage." This supposition agrees with the description given by Jan de Clerq, who wrote in Antwerp about 1347, "his fortune was small and his birth mediocre,"¹ and the phrase of Meyer, "clarus magis quam nobilis." It is significant that a document of 1347 mentioning "Myne Joncvrowe van Dronghene," calls her husband—who it may be remarked is by some historians considered James's father, by some his brother, and by others his son²—simply "Jan van Artevelde," while Willem van Vaernewyck is in the same document described as "*the noble man and knight*."³

The *Chronique de Flandre*, written at St. Omer by a contemporary with a strong bias against Artevelde, tells us "he had been with the Count of Artois across the mountains (*i.e.* into Italy), and

Account of
James Van
Artevelde's
previous
history.

¹ Such at least is Moke's translation of the lines in the *Brabantische Yeesten* :—

"Een knape niet rike van haven
Ende van geenre grooter geboort."

² *Father*, L'Espinoy, Voisin and Moke; *brother*, Lettenhove; *son*, Pauw.

³ Moke, *u.s.* 318, n 1.

to the isle of Rhodes, and afterwards was varlet of the fruitery of Louis of France."¹ As there was a certain Gauthier d'Artevelde, probably an uncle of James, in the service of Robert of Bethune as "dizenier,"² it is not impossible that James accompanied him when Robert joined the Count of Artois in his expedition to the East: if we suppose him to have had some military experience in his youth, it partly explains his election subsequently to the command of the town forces. Moreover, the office of "fructuarius," to which pertained the care of the fruit, candles, and wax for the royal household, though it might ultimately lead to knighthood, was not above the reach of the son of a prosperous merchant.

His marriage with a "brasser-esse;" and theories founded thereon.

On his return to Ghent, according to the same authority, he married a "breweress" (*brasseresse*) of miel or mead, a marriage which is probably the only origin of the term *brewer*, which is applied to him by Jean le Bel and Froissart. But though he may have gained a fortune by marriage with the widow or heiress of a brewer, there is no good evidence that he continued the business, still less

¹ I. 363.

² Lettenhove, *J. d'A.* 12, 35-6.

that he became dean of the brewers' guild; the brewers' register for this period, which is still extant, does not include his name.¹ On the other hand, he seems to have been a prominent member of the weavers' guild; his father had belonged to it before him, and James himself had been appointed to collect for one year the tax imposed on weavers' apprentices. The "Jonkfroue Kateline" who afterwards played so important a part in Artevelde's negotiations, seems to have been his second wife; and it has recently been conclusively proved that she was the daughter of the sacristan of S. Bavon's Abbey.²

Artevelde
not a
member of
the
brewers',
but of the
weavers'
guild.

Second
wife
Kateline,
daughter
of the
Sacristan
of
S. Bavon.

Of Artevelde's early life only one other circumstance is known. He is said to have possessed an

His
agri-
cultural
labours at
Basseroode.

¹ Moke, *u.s.* 321.

² Pauw. xliv.-v. and *n* 2. Lettenhove had misread "Cotr" for "Costr" in the issue roll of Ed. III. 1346; "Johanni de Costr. clerico, fratri Catherine uxoris Jacobi van Artfeld nuper defuncti . . . super quibusdam debitis in quibus domnus rex eidem tenetur," etc. The tradition of an alliance between James van Artevelde and the daughter of Sohier of Courtray is confirmed by no contemporary chronicler. With this falls Lettenhove's elaborate table of the relationship of the Arteveldes to the rural noblesse (given in most complete form in Notes to 2nd volume of his *Froissart*): it is scarcely worth while criticising it in detail till all the original documents bearing on the question have been re-examined.

estate at Basserode near the town, and to have spent much of his time in cultivating his polders¹ and in ditching; the quarrels and lawsuits with his neighbours in which he was thereby involved, were probably not unconnected with his death.²

General
estimate of
Arte-
velde's
position.

We may, then, consider Artevelde to have belonged to a well-to-do merchant family, possibly also connected by marriage with the country noblesse; yet not within the circle of those great families which practically shared between them the government of the town. His interests therefore were not so bound up with those of the ruling caste as to prevent his adopting the opposite cause. If his patriotism or ambition should lead him to admit the craftsmen to the full rights of citizens, he was admirably fitted for such work by his hereditary connection with the weavers' guild and possibly by traditional sympathies with the popular cause.³

At prime on the morning of the 27th, the meadows and the street in which Artevelde lived were thronged

¹ "Polders" are lands reclaimed from morass or the sea by draining. Such land soon becomes very valuable for agricultural purposes.

² Diericx.

³ A certain Guillaume d'Artevelde's lands were forfeited and bestowed on a Leliaert knight just before the battle of Courtray. Letten. *J. d'A.* 10.

with eager artisans. Like Froissart,¹ we can easily imagine the enthusiasm with which the populace carried their hero on their shoulders to the place of assembly: a "fine platform" had already been erected in the meadow in front of the monastery. His marvellous eloquence, which not even his enemies could deny, and which became traditional when all other characteristics were obscured,² gained every heart. A policy of neutrality would overcome their difficulties: let the King of England and his men come and stay in Flanders if they paid for what they took, but the towns must not take an active part in the war on either side.³ The King of France, he said, was too much occupied to attack them: Edward would be glad to have their friendship, and so would Philip soon.⁴ Thus their prosperity would return, and as either king would defend their neutrality against the other, they would remain

Dec. 27.
Meeting
in the
meadows
of the
Biloke.

He
proposes a
policy of
neutrality.

¹ M.S. Amiens, ed. Luce, i. 390-2.

² Froissart, u.s. : "Commencha il à preschier si bellement et si sagement qu'il converti tous coers en son opinion." Cf. Contin. Nangis ; Chron. S. Denis ; Meyer, &c.

³ Frois. MS. Amiens, u.s. : "Estoit son entente que li pays de Flandre seroit ouvers et appareillies pour requellier le roy d'Angleterre et tous ley siens, se venir y volloient, pour paiier tout ce qu'il y prenderoient."

⁴ M.S. Valenciennes, ed. Luce, i. 391.

unhurt while the great war was raging outside their borders.

Modern
criticisms.

It has been argued by a modern historian that the Gantois in assuming this neutral attitude were not violating their allegiance to their lords, the Count and King, for by the feudal and communal code they had a right to refuse obedience upon denial of justice, and the illegal seizure of Sohier, a citizen of Ghent, gave them sufficient excuse.¹ But though his imprisonment doubtless produced great irritation, this plea is not mentioned by any contemporary writer; yet, as they all enlarge upon his fate, they would certainly have laid stress upon this explanation had it occurred to them. That this was partly the cause of the action of Ghent cannot be questioned; but it was probably never regarded as a legal justification.² With whatever arguments Artevelde may have supported his proposals, they were at once accepted, and he was led back with rejoicings to his house.

His advice
accepted
by the
populace,

¹ Lenz, *Situation de la Flandre à l'avènement de J. d'A. Nouv. Arch.* i. 278.

² Upon denial of justice by the Count or his officers, the *échevins* were empowered by their charters to disregard the Count's judicial rights till redress was given; Vanderk. *Siecle*, 81. But this is very different from a refusal to follow their lord in war.

For the present the ruling class was ready to follow the populace. A week after the meeting at the Biloke, on Jan. 3, the Gantois met to elect captains, "hoofdmans," for the year, *i.e.* military leaders of the five parishes;¹ it has before been noticed that the clause of the treaty of Arques forbidding the appointment of captains had never been observed. Artevelde was elected captain of the parish of S. John; his four colleagues were Guillaume de Vaernewyck, Gilliot de Lens, Guillaume van Huse, and Pierre van den Hove. It was usual to give one of the captains the command-in-chief of the town forces, under the supervision of the échevins: this office, *t' beleet van der stede*, was now bestowed on the Captain of S. John.² The name of Vaernewyck, his colleague, shows that some at least of the "grands lignages" were ready to act with the popular leader. Artevelde's escort

and
acquiesced
in by the
magnates.
1338,
Jan. 3.
Election of
Captains.

Artevelde
chosen
Captain
of S. John,
and Com-
mander-
in-chief of
the town
troops.

¹ Lenz. u.s. 280, n 1. "V. hoofdmans die waren gemaect saterdaghes naer nieuwe dagh." *Comptes de Gand*.

² So that the descriptions of his office by the best contemporary chroniclers are not vague, but tolerably exact, *e.g.*

Chron. Comitum. Fland. (Corp. i. 211). "Gandavum
cujus *summus capitaneus* erat *J. d'A.* vir ferox et industrius."

Ægidius li Muisis (Corp. ii. 219). "*J. d'A.* assumptus concorditer
ab illis de Gandavo eorum *capitaneus*."

was fixed at twenty-two men, that of Vaernewyck at twenty, that of Lens and the other two captains at fifteen. This is probably the only historical basis for Jehan le Bel's statement, copied by Froissart, that Artevelde was always accompanied by "sixty or eighty armed varlets" who seized or put to death all whom he pointed out to them.¹

Jan. 5.
Ordinance
for the
mainten-
ance of the
peace.

Two days later an important ordinance was issued in the name of the first échevin Thomas de Vaernewyck, probably not without consultation with the newly-elected captains.² A maximum price was fixed for corn, as well as the amount which each person might daily buy at the market. The fixing of prices by the magistrates was quite usual at the time, and was in fact a part of that system of supervision which determined all the processes of manufacture and commerce ; but it was now specially needed to prevent famine if Count Louis should besiege the town, or the King of France forbid the exportation of corn. The other regulations were designed to maintain public order : all who had

¹ Jehan le Bel, i. 127-9. Froissart, ed. Luce, i. 127.

² Lenz. u.s. 281-2. Cf. Letten. *Hist.* iii. 188. Thomas de Vaernewyck was head of the family of that name. He had been "first échevin of the Keure" in 1324, 1327, 1330, 1333.

been banished by the good towns of Flanders were to depart from the territory of Ghent within three days, and those refusing to leave churches where they had found asylum were to be taken out by force. No one, on pain of a heavy fine, was to remain in the streets after curfew, except the watch and priests and doctors visiting the sick. A legal truce was proclaimed to last until the Thursday after the great carnival, during which all quarrels were to cease. At the same time the police of the town was re-organised, and the office of constable for each district re-established. If then the wool famine were to continue the best means had been taken to prevent that outburst of lawlessness which destitution usually occasions, as well as to restore the town, excited by the events of the last few days, to tranquillity.

Philip of Valois had at once seen the importance of the movement at Ghent. As soon as he heard what had taken place, he ordered that the goods of Gantois should be seized at Tournay and elsewhere, on January 12th summoned the feudal array to meet at Amiens in Mid-Lent, and sent the Bishop of Cambray to Eecloo, where a parliament of repre-

Counter-
measures
of Philip
unavailing

sentatives of the towns met on January 15th, to propose an alliance. The negotiations were useless.¹ Meanwhile the magistrates of Ghent had not been idle. On the first day of February, Jean Willade and Jacques Masch, the latter belonging to one of the most important of the great families, journeyed to Louvain to obtain from the Count of Guelders, Edward III.'s plenipotentiary, some relaxation of the prohibition of export. In a provisional convention permission was given to the Flemish cities to obtain wool at Dordrecht, and at a parliament at Bruges the Count, finding it useless to refuse, consented to the arrangement. On the eleventh of the same month, Jacques Masch started himself for Dordrecht, to purchase and supervise the transit of

Feb. 1.
Embassy
to Louvain
to gain re-
laxation of
Edward's
order.

Permission
to obtain
wool by
way of
Dordrecht.

¹ It is to this period that Lettenhove, *J. d'A.* 48, attributes the visit of Artevelde to England described in the Rome MS. Lettenhove seems to believe such a visit did take place; but it is extremely improbable that if it had occurred it would not have been mentioned either by Froissart in his earlier versions or by other contemporary chroniclers. If Artevelde had crossed to England, "grant et estofé aussi bien comme uns contes" (ed. Luce, i. 414), and had dined with his colleagues at Eltham, "en la cambre dou roi et de la roine" (*Ib.* 415), Froissart would not be our only informant. A more recent writer, in the *Edinb. Rev.* Jan. 1881, 94 *n.*, introduces an account of the visit with "according to Froissart"; but it is only according to one, and that the least trustworthy, of the many MSS.

the first supplies of wool, which he brought back with him on March 10th. Only those who remember the hymns of sobbing thanksgiving which went up from the factories of Lancashire when the first cotton bales arrived after the American war, can understand the tumult of joy in Ghent when the craftsmen were enabled to resume their work.

March 10.
Arrival of
the first
supplies.

The policy of neutrality recommended by Artevelde seemed to be entirely successful; even the King of France, finding that many weeks must elapse before he could bring together a large army, deemed it expedient to temporise. It was in the presence of Philip's agents that the Count had consented to the convention; the sequestration of the goods of the Ghent citizens was almost immediately removed.

Philip
forced to
tempor

Froissart gives a picturesque account, unconfirmed however by other evidence, of an interview between the Captain of S. John and the Count, which, if it took place at all, must be assigned to this period.¹ Louis, at this time staying at Ghent, summoned Artevelde to his hostel. Artevelde went, but with so great a following that the Count dared not lay

¹ MS. Valenciennes, ed. Luce, i. 393.

Interview
between
Artevelde
and Count
Louis.

hands upon him. Louis, condescending to argue with his subject, showed him many reasons why he ought to keep the people in their obedience to the King of France, who had more right thereto than any other prince. If he would do this, the Count would reward him richly; if not, muttered Louis, he was to fear his lord's vengeance.¹ But "James cared nothing for his threats, and replied that he would do with boldness what he had promised the 'commun,' and, with God's help, he would carry it through with success. And so they parted." Froissart, by the way in which he tells the story, seems to hint that had the Captain been scantily attended, the Count would not have scrupled at once to seize him.

Some of
the "Lig-
nages" still
faithful to
France
and the
Count.

Having failed to win him by promises or threats, the prince took counsel, continues Froissart, with his friends how he should get rid of him. Among these were some of highest lineage in the town, still, it may be supposed, faithful to the traditional French alliance, and too rich to be affected by the disastrous consequences of the stoppage of trade; these promised to have him killed "secretly or

¹ "Lui offry plusieurs biens à faire; et entre deulx lui disait parolles de souppeçon et de manaces."

otherwise.”¹ “So they laid many a trap for him, but all without avail, for one must needs be stronger than the whole town to be able to touch him.”² According to Lettenhove,³ on what authority he says not, the popular indignation caused by those attempts treacherously to slay their leader was so great that the Gantois all assumed the white hood, the mark of the men of Ghent when assembled beneath their banner. Like the Dauphin in 1358 and Louis XVI. in 1792, the Count was forced to wear the symbol of liberty; but, fearing lest he should be held captive, he managed to escape during a hunt, and hastened to find refuge in his castle of Male.⁴

Repeated embassies were meantime being sent to Philip, but to no purpose. Thus, on March 14th, two *échevins* went to Paris to clear the town from the

¹ MS. Amiens: “Li comtez . . . acquist amis des *plus grans de linage* de la ville de Gand. MS. Valenciennes: “Avoit avec luy aucuns des *bourgeois* de la ville, qui *avoient des grans amis et lignages* dedens la ville.”

² MS. Valenc: “Puissant de combattre contre toute la ville et le *Franc*,” i.e. the *châtellenie* of Ghent.

³ *Hist.* iii. 191.

⁴ Lettenhove's chronology is somewhat confused; he places this interview before the Count's consent to the convention, *ib.* 193; but its date—if it ever occurred—is of minor importance.

March 21.
Execution
of Sohier.

Excom-
muni-
cation of the
Gantois ;
gathering
of French
forces.

charges which had been brought against it: the king replied that he was ready to protect alike their industries and their liberties. But while the Gantois were firm in their policy of neutrality,—on March 16th the representatives of the great towns met at Louvain to confirm the provisional agreement of the Gantois,¹—and while the more formidable means of coercion which the king possessed were yet untried, no settlement could be arrived at. What these means were, was soon to be seen. The great fair of Ghent, opening in Mid-Lent on the Sunday of “Laetare,” usually brought crowds of Flemish and foreign merchants together. It was a suitable opportunity for carrying out a terrorising policy. While the town was still thronged with visitors, the news arrived that on the previous Saturday, March 21st, Sohier of Courtray had been executed in the castle of Rupelmonde, that on the Sunday the Bishop of Senlis and the Abbot of St. Denis, after listening to a vigorous sermon against the rebellious Flemings, had put the Gantois and their adherents under interdict,² and that the French forces were gathering on the

¹ Lenz, *u.s.* 258.

² Li Muisis, *Corp.* ii, 219.

border. That Philip's purpose might not be obscure, two days later the citizens of Ghent received a letter from him, in which, after reminding them that by the treaty of Athies the French king had a right to cause the fortifications of the Flemish towns to be destroyed, he ordered them to dismantle their city immediately, and requested the Count, the nobles, and the other cities to constrain them if disobedient.¹ The execution of Sohier, instead of striking terror, only increased the hostility of the Gantois, and especially of the higher classes, towards the Count.² As to the interdict, an agent was at once sent to Liège, the religious centre of the Low Countries,³ to ask the advice of the clergy there.⁴ And Artevelde was soon to show that the

¹ Lettenhove, *J. d'A.* 51.

² Jehan le Bel, i. 132. "De quoy moult de gens en furent moult dolens et en sceurent mal grè au comte."

Li Muisis, *Corp.* ii. 218. "Gandenses quorum civis erat et tota patria fuit commota . . . et dicitur quod causa fuit rebellionum sequentium."

³ Thus, Commynes, lib. ii. cap. xiii., mentions a saying of Hymbercourt that as many masses were sung daily at Liège as at Rome.

⁴ The Friars seem, as of old, to have sympathised strongly with the popular party: "Two Friars Minor, two Jacobins, two White Brothers and two Augustinians" took part in the negotiations with the French clergy. Lenz, *u.s.* 290, *n* 1.

communal forces could hold their own against the French troops.

April 11.
Attempt of
Leliaert
knights to
take
Ghent by
surprise.

In the first week of April the army came together at Tournay; on the ninth Philip arrived, intending to make that town the basis of operations. But he seems to have thought it possible that Ghent might be taken by surprise, and so refused to accede to a truce which Thomas de Vaernewyck had gone thither to propose. After the defeat at Cadsand, a number of Leliaert knights had taken refuge in the strong castle of Biervliet. These now determined to dash suddenly upon the town, hoping to find it unguarded. On the Saturday before Easter, when the gloom of Passiontide was heightened by the terrors of excommunication, Roland of Ghent rang out the alarm. A body of cavalry was seen advancing to the gates: before they had come up to the walls the whole town was in arms, and the cavaliers retired without doing any damage. After waiting some time for Philip to move, and finding that he was not yet ready, it was determined to follow the Leliaerts to Biervliet, where they had encamped. On the 22nd, having cut down the bridge of Deinse, over which the French if they marched against.

April 22.
Expedi-
tion under
Artevelde.

Ghent would have to pass, and so leaving Ghent in security, the forces of the town set out, those of the parishes under their captains, those of the guilds under their deans, Artevelde being commander-in-chief of the whole. The accounts of the town sum up the objects of their expedition,—“to help to restore peace, liberty, and trade to the land.”¹ At Biervliet a battle took place, and the communal forces were victorious in so far that they kept the field.

Success at
Biervliet.

Philip was now perhaps beginning to see that the reduction of Ghent would be a difficult task; and that meanwhile it would be wise to prevent its allying itself with Edward. So two days after the departure of Artevelde appeared a royal sergeant from Tournay with important proposals. Philip was ready to allow entire freedom of commerce between Flanders and England; he would promise not to carry on war in the county, nor to ask aid from the towns. In return they were to prevent the landing of English troops on the Flemish coast. It was expressly provided that the Count and the

Philip
offers to
recognise
their
neutrality.

¹ “Omme te helpen settene 't land in rusten, in wette, im payse, en vrieden, en in neringhe.” Quoted Lett. *Hist.* iii. 197.

class. Modern historians, however, ascribe a further importance to this assembly as having created the system which is known as "the three members of Flanders ;"¹ of this there is not the slightest historical evidence, as will be shown later.

Before the union of all the great towns Louis had to give way. In the presence of their deputies at his castle of Male, and again at a general assembly at Oostcamp, he swore to maintain their liberties, and tacitly consented to their alliance. After this meeting the Count went to the camp of the Gantois, which was still at Biervliet,² and here renewed his promises. Peace seemed to be restored between the prince and his subjects; the news brought to Ghent on the night of May 8 was received with enthusiasm, again to break out on the return of the victorious army.³ Throughout the contemporary chroniclers represent Artevelde as the leader of the Gantois: this is explained not by any assumption on his part of dictatorial or tribunician power, but simply by his official position as commander of the military forces of the town.

May.
Acquiescence of the
Count ;
apparent
general re-
conciliation.

¹ Lettenhove, *Hist.* iii. 198-9.

² Li Muisis, *Corp.* ii. 220.

³ Lenz, *u.s.* 295.

To make the reconciliation complete, Artevelde, Guillaume de Vaernewyck his colleague, the échevins, and other notable citizens accompanied Louis's envoys through West Flanders, in order to induce the small towns and villages to take an oath of fidelity to the Count: in the early part of June a like oath was taken through similar mediation by that part of Flanders held of the emperor, though it was not so directly concerned.¹

The towns refuse to aid Edward, with whom, however, June 10, a commercial treaty is made. Removal of the prohibition of export.

In May Edward had informed the Flemish towns that his ambassadors, the Bishop of Lincoln and the Earls of Northampton and Suffolk, were about to cross to Brabant, and had again invited them to make an alliance. But the townspeople were firm in their policy of neutrality, and would only consent to a commercial treaty; this, agreed to by each of the towns separately, and approved by the Count, was signed at Antwerp on June 10. The permission to buy wool at Dordrecht is now extended: Flemish merchants can buy it in England or elsewhere as they please. In addition, the neutrality of the towns is more precisely defined. The Count of Flanders with his feudatories may continue to serve Philip,

¹ Lenz, *u.s.* 296, n 2.

but "the citizens and those living in the towns" are not to follow him. Neither French nor English troops are to enter the county. The English are indeed permitted to enter the harbours, but they are not to disembark, or stay longer than one tide.¹ On the 26th Edward confirmed the treaty, ordering at the same time that stuffs marked with the seal of Ghent should be exempted from examination as to quality and length in the English markets. By heaping favours upon the Gantois he hoped at last to win them to a political alliance.

Neutrality
of the
towns
recogn-
nised.

Negotiations had been carried on simultaneously with the King of France: at a meeting of delegates at Ghent on June 2, at which Artevelde was present,² it was determined to send ambassadors to Paris to inform the king of the reconciliation between the Count and his subjects. To the first échevin, Thomas de Vaernewyck, the mission was once more intrusted. The embassy met with a favourable reception from Philip. To restore some measure of confidence he granted two general safe-conducts; one, that Flemish merchants should not be seized in

Favour-
able
reception
of Ghent
embassy at
Paris.

¹ Rymer, orig. ed. v. 53.

² Lenz, *u.s.* 297, n. 3.

June 13.
Philip
consents
to the
neutrality
of the
towns, but
feudal
service
to be
rendered.

France on account of the arrears of tribute, the other, that Gantois should not be held responsible for the private debts of their fellow citizens.¹ Much more important was the treaty signed by the king on June 13 : "As our dear and faithful cousin the Count of Flanders has begged us graciously to hear the supplications of the communes and the inhabitants of the towns of Flanders, who have shown us the hardships they have suffered by default of merchandise, and the grief with which the citizens of Ghent have been afflicted by reason of the interdict, we, having heard the great necessity and pitiable state of the country by several of our loyal councillors who have been in those parts, make the following concessions," &c. He pardons their misdeeds, and wills, "as far as in us lies," that they should be absolved, if possible, by the Holy Father. They are to have entire freedom of commerce, and English merchants are to be allowed to enter the county ; but enemies of France in arms, or even without arms if they come in great numbers, are to be resisted. And finally, that trade might not be injured, Philip promises not to require

¹ Lenz, *u.s.* 297, n 3, 298.

military aid from the towns, unless for the defence of the county, save the due service of the Count and his feudal vassals. On June 21 Vaernewyck brought back to the deputies assembled at Ghent the answer of the French king ; a month later the Bishop of Senlis came to the town to remove the interdict.

Here may be considered to end the first period of Artevelde's public activity. Throughout, his name but seldom appears, and the initiative would almost seem to have been taken by Vaernewyck and his friends of the ruling class. But the impetus had been given by Artevelde ; it was to him that the policy of neutrality was due, and it had been under the guidance of the Captain of S. John that the city forces had won their first success. The policy which he had urged had been entirely successful ; while the two great antagonists were engaged in their struggle, the Flemish cities were to continue their peaceful industry, helping neither and attacked by neither. The Count, it is true, was still to perform the service due to his lord, but the necessities of a great industrial population had compelled both Count and King to free the townsfolk from any such obligation.

End of the first period of Artevelde's influence. Apparent success of the policy of neutrality.

The forces of the new period that was beginning had for the time overcome the forces of feudalism.

On July 12 the English fleet left the Thames.

July 19.
Edward at
Sluys.

According to Li Muisis, Edward wished to land at Sluys, but the Flemings under Artevelde resisted,¹ whereupon Edward departed and went on to Antwerp. This chronicler, where we are able to check his statements, is so trustworthy, that it is probable that something of the kind did take place, but his words do not necessarily imply armed resistance. Possibly Edward, without expecting to succeed, tried to shake the Flemings in their determination to remain neutral, and finding his efforts useless, went on without attempting to land. From Antwerp, where he found his ally the Duke of Brabant by no means disposed to begin the war, he proceeded to Coblenz: here the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, in one of his moments of resolution, created him Vicar of the Empire. As Imperial Vicar, Edward had a right to the military service of "Flandre Impériale:" thus the relations of the Flemings and the two great contending powers were still further complicated. This is well shown by the letter

At
Coblenz
created
Vicar of
the
Empire.
Hence
claims of
military
service
from
Imperial
Flanders.

¹ "Se opposuerunt," *Corp.* ii. 220.

addressed to the Count of Flanders and his subjects by the Count of Guelders, the representative alike of Edward and the Emperor.¹ He begins by informing them that it had been decided at Coblenz by four electors present in person, and the representatives of the other three, that a Vicar of the Empire was entitled to exercise all rights and powers of the Emperor. The King of England having been chosen with their consent to that high office, had summoned all the feudatories of the empire "from Cologne to the sea,"² to a meeting at Mechlin; to this the Count of Flanders had sent envoys announcing that he was ready to perform his due service to the emperor and his vicar. Since that time the Count had given no reply to the summons sent to him. The Count of Guelders therefore reminds Louis and his subjects of the evils wrought against them by the King of France, and announces that the emperor is ready to aid them in recovering Lille, Douai, and Bethune, of which they had been despoiled. Then, with a sudden

Letter of the Count of Gueldres his plenipotentiary, demands their obedience to Edward both as Imperia Vicar and as King of France, and promises recovery of lost towns.

¹ Given in notes, pp. 548-551, of Lettenhove's *Froissart*, ii.

² "Up die marche van Coelne nederwaerts," *i.e.* lower than the march of Cologne.

transition, he proceeds to summon the Count in the name of the King of England, to recognise Edward's title to the French throne, and to do homage to him as suzerain. The three good towns are to examine the matter; for this reason he proceeds to state Edward's claim. If the Count will aid him to recover his rights, the staple shall be re-established in Flanders, the aforesaid towns reconquered, and Edward as King of France will revoke all illegal sentences passed upon the county by "his predecessors."

But the towns remain neutral, and nothing further done this year.

But it was already too late to do anything that year. To the citizens the fixing of the staple in Flanders, to the Count a marriage for his son with the Princess Isabella, were offered as the rewards of an alliance. But the good towns would not abandon the position they had taken up; and when in the following year Philip again declared his consent to their commercial treaties, it might seem that their policy of neutrality was understood and would be respected by both parties.

1339. Jan. Philip again recognises their neutrality.

This declaration of Philip was perhaps only intended to throw them off their guard. He was not himself ready to violate the treaties to which he had so recently sworn, but while Edward was quietly passing

the winter in Brabant after disbanding his forces, the Leliaert nobles might be allowed to make a fresh attempt in Flanders: if they met with any success, Philip might aid them with the troops he had been gathering at Tournay. The expedition was organised by the Leliaert knights in Lille, Douai, and S. Omer. Bergues, a town near Dunkirk, was easily surprised: five-and-twenty citizens were sacrificed to their revenge. Thence they hastened to Dixmude, which lay in the direction of Bruges; and here they were overtaken by the Count, who had left Tournay to join them. Bruges, they imagined, might without difficulty be captured, for the civic militia was engaged in the siege of Lidekerke on the frontier of Brabant. But speedy intelligence was brought to the Brugeois; they hurried home and marched rapidly towards Dixmude, while at the same time James van Artevelde led the Ghent militia in the direction of Ypres to cut off the Count's retreat.¹ Louis and his followers were, as they thought, in perfect security when the Brugeois came upon them in the night: the Leliaerts fled precipitately, nor did the Count halt till he reached S. Omer.

Attempt of
the Count
and the
Leliaerts
to conquer
the county.

Feb. 12.
Attacked
in the
night by
the
Brugeois,
they are
put to
flight.

¹ Lett. *J. d'A.* 64.

Flemings
demand
the
restitution
of Lille,
Douai,
and
Bethune.

Emboldened by their success, the Flemish towns sent to Philip to protest against the countenance given to their enemies: perhaps unjustly, for the French king had furnished no actual aid, and the enterprise was only one of the more important episodes in the continual war between the Leliaerts, *i.e.* the rural noblesse, and the towns. Had the county been in perfect peace, the men of Bruges would not have been attacking the Leliaerts at Lidekerke. But they were not satisfied with his declarations that he had not assisted their enemies; they dared even to demand the restitution of Lille, Douai, and Bethune. These Edward had promised to win for them, if they would join him against Philip; and they seem to have thought that Philip, knowing this, would be ready to grant the same terms as his opponent to prevent their joining his enemies. But it was hardly to be expected that he would thus readily surrender what it had been the object of so many wars and intrigues to gain. It is also to be noticed that the towns did not promise, even if Philip yielded to their demands, to take an active part in the war. But Edward was supposed to be about to invade France; the Flemings

must be kept in a good temper, and they were therefore dismissed with some sort of vague promise that justice should be done them.

For some months there is a total dearth of information. The chroniclers resume their narratives with Edward's campaign in autumn. On October 23, the French and English armies were face to face near Flamengerie, about midway between Mons and Cambrai, neither daring to offer battle. Meanwhile the militia of the Flemish towns had met near Menin, —to attack Lille and Douai if the English were victorious, to defend the county if the French gained the day. They might even at the last moment see that the surest way to gain what they desired was to join Edward at once: if they were disposed to do so, the distance from their camp to the scene of action was not so great as to prevent their arrival in time to decide the battle. The conduct of Count Louis can only be explained by supposing that he saw this danger. Hastening to Courtray, he summoned a parliament of deputies to meet him on October 21 that he might announce to them Philip's consent to their demands. But when the deputies, among them Artevelde, had come together,

October.
Edward's
autumn
campaign.

Position
of the
Communal
forces.

Trick of
the Count
to prevent
the
junction of
Flemings
and
English.

the Count wasted several days in discussion, and no definite statement could be obtained from him. On the 24th, Edward, unable to force on a battle, retired: as soon as the Count learnt this, he returned to France.¹ His object had been accomplished: a junction of the Flemings and English had been prevented.

Edward's
first
campaign
resultless;

Edward's first campaign had been utterly useless; his treasure was exhausted, and his German allies had abandoned him. The Flemings had shown how easily they could be tricked, and Philip, a careless chevalier unable to look far ahead, thought he could now with impunity set at nought the treaties he had made. From this time forward the border-districts of Flanders were ruthlessly pillaged by the garrisons of the neighbouring French towns, and there was no longer even a pretence of respecting Flemish neutrality. The conduct of the towns in listening to Edward's proposals was, therefore, not a disloyal abandonment of their liege lord, but a necessity forced upon them by that lord's treachery. When Edward on his arrival at Brussels again asked the aid of "the good towns," they were ready to accept

so Philip
no longer
respects
the
neutrality
of the
Flemish
towns.

They are
therefore
justified in
accepting
Edward's
offers.

¹ Lett. J. d'A. 65.

his terms. He summoned, if we may trust Froissart,¹ a "great parliament," at which representatives of all the Flemish cities were present, "especially Jacques d'Artevelde." To his request that they would conclude an alliance, and his offer to reconquer for them Lille, Douai, and Bethune, if they would consent, they replied,—according to general tradition, by Artevelde's advice,—that they would willingly aid him, on condition that he assumed the title and arms of King of France. Jehan le Bel² explains that the towns were bound to pay two million florins to the Pope if they made war upon the King of France, and that they wished to escape from this obligation by Edward's assuming that title himself. The reason assigned is obviously erroneous; there is no proof of any such obligation, and Jehan le Bel probably confused together the conditions of the treaty of Athies and the papal bull empowering the French king to put Flanders under interdict. If his account had been correct, the Flemings would indeed have been simple-minded to suppose that the

Edward assumes the title "King of France,"—according to tradition, by Artevelde's advice.

¹ Ed. Luce, who, i. ccxvi., gives an excellent summary of this part of *Froissart*. Jehan le Bel, i. 163; says that Edward, after the first campaign, led his army through Ghent, and there negotiated with Artevelde: this is of course incorrect.

² I. 163.

Pope could be tricked by so transparent a device. Edward, it would appear, had occasionally used the title "King of France" before; but from this time it became an integral part of the royal style.¹

On November 1, 1339, Edward had written that he intended to set sail for England at once: on the next day, however, he went to Ghent, and seems to have determined, after deliberation with the Flemish leaders, to prolong his stay on the Continent. Soon returning to Antwerp, he renewed his negotiations for the marriage of his daughter with the Count's eldest son, Louis de Male, offering the prince the same terms as his subjects, viz., the restitution of the three towns, and renunciation of all the claims of his "predecessors." By the Count the offer was rejected; with the towns, on the other hand, a number of important treaties were made. The

1340, Jan.
The towns
recognise
Edward as
King of
France
and their
liege lord.

first, signed in the early days of January, recognised Edward's claim to the French throne, and declared that the citizens were ready to obey him as their liege lord. Especially important is

¹ That the formal assumption of the title was regarded as important is shown by the king's letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury declaring that his subjects need not be frightened thereat. Longman, *Hist. Edw. III.* i. 165.

the declaration that they will never violate those treaties to which the sanction of excommunication had been attached, and *therefore remain faithful to the King of France*. Although again and again the county had been put under interdict for reasons obviously unjust, the sentence had not even yet lost all its terrors. But if their action could be shown to be strictly legal according to the ideas of the time—and it was not *quite* certain that Philip of Valois was the rightful heir—the clergy could with a safe conscience set the interdict at defiance. The real explanation, however, of this insistence on Edward's assumption of the title "King of France" lies in that curious reverence for "rights" which characterises the middle ages; that genuine respect for titles and documents which to modern readers seems mere irony in the midst of perpetual wars. To abandon their liege lord they would have felt to be an act of treason; if then they were obliged to turn to Edward, he must declare himself their rightful suzerain as a salve to their consciences. It was at Ghent, where Edward was again staying, that, on January 23, he quartered the French with the English arms,

Importance of the title—
(1) due to mediaeval regard for "rights";
(2) emboldened the townsfolk to disregard the interdict.

Edward in
Ghent.

“by the advice of Artevelde,” says a contemporary English chronicler:¹ the first document in which he mentions the year of his reign in France is dated from Ghent three days later.² We can thus understand the full significance of the mention in the Wardrobe Rolls of 1340 of the sum expended by Edward while in Ghent for a harness and tunic, the latter of red and blue velvet worked with the arms of England and France, with leopards and fleur-de-lis.³ From a similar source, the account-books of Ghent, we learn that the magistracy presented the king during his stay with four barrels of wine, a piece of scarlet cloth, and two oxen; the wine being purchased from one of the *échevins*, the oxen from the Captain of S. John,⁴—bred probably on his farm at Basseroode.

Historians of Belgium are wont to laud Artevelde

¹ “Mediante quodam vasallo nomine Jacobo de Artyngfeld Flandricon.” Knyghton, iv. 1. The record in the Wardrobe Rolls of 1340, “Jacobus de Artevelde de praestitis super denariis sibi debitis pro negotio regis faciendo, M lib.,” apparently concerns a present in recognition of his services. Notes to Lett. *Froiss.* iii. 480.

² “Datum apud Gandavum vicesimo sexto die januarii anno regni nostri Franciae primo, Angliae vero quarto-decimo.” Rymer, v. 155.

³ “Pro rege, de velvet rubro et blu, operato de armis Angliae et Franciae cum leopardis et floribus lilii.” Lett. *u.s.*

⁴ *Ib.* 476.

as one of the founders of their state ; as one of the first to see the natural connection between those provinces which now form that kingdom, and to aim at rendering that connection closer. It would be more true to say that the towns of the Netherlands, being all in the same stage of development, naturally endeavoured to strengthen themselves by alliance with one another ; and that the period of Artevelde, when these towns had reached their greatest power, was especially fruitful in such attempts. But there is no evidence directly connecting Artevelde's name with these efforts. The most important of them was the treaty concluded on December 3, 1339, between the towns of Brabant and Flanders,—in theory between “the Duke of Brabant and his towns and the Count of Flanders and his towns.” Its main articles may be thus summarised :—

1339, Dec.
1340, Jan.
Alliance
between
the
towns of
Flanders,
Brabant,
and
Hainault ;

1. An offensive and defensive alliance.
2. No war to be waged or peace made save with the consent of both countries.
3. Mutual freedom of commerce.
4. A common coinage to be struck, of which the value is not to be arbitrarily changed. Each of the good towns of Flanders and of Brabant

(Louvain, Brussels, and Antwerp) is to appoint one representative to superintend its issue.

establish-
ing a
central
court of
appeal,

5. A court of appeal to be established consisting of ten persons, four nominated by the Duke and Count, six by the good towns, to meet in the country of the complainant, in the town nearest the defendant.

and central
delibera-
tive
assembly.

6. The two princes and the deputies of the towns to meet for deliberation three times a year, on the fourteenth day after Candlemas at Ghent, after the Nativity of S. John at Brussels, after All Saints at Alost.¹

A month later the alliance was joined by the Count and the towns of Hainault. Unfortunately we are unable to learn how far its articles were carried out. Though the princes are mentioned as assenting, the alliance was essentially a town league. Such leagues were spread over Western Europe, and are among the many signs of the rise of the third estate. Had Artevelde lived, the Hanseatic League might have found a formidable rival on the shores of the German Ocean.

At the end of January Edward had written to

¹ Text in *Lett. Hist.* iii., App. 586 seq.

Benedict XII. to justify his conduct; in February he published a manifesto at Ghent, wherein he restated his claim and promised protection to all who would recognise his right, "as our dear and faithful good folk of the land of Flanders have done."¹ But Benedict had already sent admonitory letters to the Flemish cities: "The past ought to instruct you for the future, and teach you what you have to fear for your persons and property if, which God forbid, the King of France is forced to make war upon you."² In a letter to Edward he had reminded him of the faithlessness of the Flemings: "Often have they cast out their natural lords from Flanders itself. If they acted thus towards those whom they were naturally bound to reverence, what can you, my son, expect?"³ It is scarcely necessary to say that these remonstrances were not attended to; and on the 4th of April the Bishop of Senlis and the Abbot of S. Denis declared Flanders under interdict.⁴

Benedict XII. admonishes the Flemings and warns Edward.

April 4. Flanders again under interdict.

Meanwhile, Edward had left Ghent to return to England, leaving behind him Queen Philippa in

¹ Text in Lett. Hist. iii. 238.

² *Ib.* 234.

³ Rymer, v. 173.

⁴ Li Muisis, *Corp.* ii. 222.

February. the Abbey of S. Peter, "often visited and comforted
Edward returns to by Artevelde and the lords, by the dames and
England, damosels"¹ of Ghent. Here she gave birth to
leaving Queen John, hence called "of Gaunt";² about the same time
Queen Philippa a son was born to Artevelde. While L'Espinoy
at Ghent. assures us that the Queen of England held the child
of the Captain of S. John at the baptismal font,
Birth of John of and that he was therefore named "Philip" after
Gaunt and Philip van her, the Chronicle of Bern says that James van
Artevelde. Artevelde acted as godfather to the young prince.³
The former statement seems more likely to be
true; but there is no contemporary evidence in
its support.

March. Not only did Artevelde and Guillaume de
Three Vaernewyck accompany Edward to Sluys, where
treaties between he embarked on February 21, but two échevins
Edward and the of Ghent as well as deputies from the other towns
towns. accompanied him to England, to receive the oaths
of the English towns to the treaties which had
already been drawn up.⁴ These were three in
number. In the first, Edward promises that the

¹ *Froiss.* 1st version, ed. Luce, i. 187.

² *Ib.* 483.

³ L'Espinoy, *Recherches*; Notes to Lett. *Froiss.* iii. 476.

⁴ *Ib.* 481; quoting *Comptes de Gand*.

staple shall be fixed in Brabant or Flanders. Flemish or Brabançon cloth was to be received in England without remeasuring or other examination. English merchants who had bought cloth in Flanders or Brabant were to be constrained to pay according to the custom of the town at which the purchase was made. Edward would not make peace or truce with France save with the consent of his allies, and he would protect them against the enmity of the French king. By the second, Edward binds himself to raise a navy to hold the narrow seas and protect merchants. Two-thirds of the men-at-arms to serve on board are to be chosen in Flanders or Brabant, or wholly in Flanders if so the Flemings wish, but all are to be paid by the king. He will in addition pay to the Flemish towns in four instalments the sum of 140,000 livres, and will fix the staple at Bruges for fifteen years. In the third treaty, he gives up the right acquired by his "predecessors" of putting Flanders under interdict, and promises to restore not only Lille, Douai, Bethune, and Orchies, but also the County of Artois, lost since 1191; to this he will add Tournay and its châtelanie. The customs of the time of Count

I.
Alliance,
and
favourable
terms for
Flemish
merchants.

II.
Edward to
maintain
navy, to
pay
subsidy,
and fix
staple at
Bruges.

III.
As King of
France
Edward
promises
to restore
lost
territory.

Robert of Bethune of blessed memory are confirmed, and, in order that commerce may flourish, Edward promises that the coinage of France, Brabant, and Flanders shall be alike in value and weight. On the importance of this treaty it is needless to dilate : had it been carried out, it would have re-established Flanders in its old rights, and would have restored to it all it had lost during the last hundred and fifty years.¹

Discontent
of the
London
merchants.

The privileges accorded to the Flemish merchants were so great that until the seals of the English towns were affixed they were to be content with the same rights as English merchants.² Such concessions naturally caused discontent. At a parliament held at Westminster the treaties were ratified at the end of March : but not until two months had passed did the London merchants yield to "the demands and affectionate supplications" which Edward addressed to them at a special audience at the Tower. Even then, the record says, it was unwillingly that "the aldermen, and the richer and discreter citizens of each ward, affixed the city seal to the

¹ Text in Lett. *Hist.* iii. 602 *seq.* Analysis, *ib.* 223 *seq.*

² Lett. *J. d'A.* 73.

said concession, to preserve the king's honour and to avoid his indignation and various other perils."¹ Ultimately the seals were attached of each of the other "good towns," York, Lincoln, Bristol, Norwich, and the Cinque Ports.²

Almost immediately after the excommunication of the Flemings had been pronounced, the French had begun to make pillaging expeditions from Tournay. Ghent had at once sent out a large force, under the command of Artevelde, which not only drove the French back to the city whence they started, but even, on the Wednesday before Palm Sunday, encamped in the villages which surround it. The city bells were rung; all citizens were ordered to the walls; the suburbs were burnt by order of the magistrates, and the artisans who dwelt in them obliged to enter the city.³ Edward had left behind him the Earls of Salisbury and Suffolk, who were at this time at Ypres with a number of men-at-arms; Artevelde proposed, with their aid and that of the Ypres militia, to make a vigorous attack

Artevelde
before
Tournay.

¹ Lett. *J. d'A.* 75. Also in his *Froiss.* iii. 483.

² Lett. *Froiss.* iii. 482; cf. *Hist.* iii. 240.

³ Li Muisis, *Corp.* ii. 222.

English
forces
coming
to his
assistance
are routed,

upon Tournay. The earls readily agreed, and set off to join him; but a trifling success on the way induced them to turn aside in the direction of Lille. Before they had reached that town, they were caught in an ambush, and Salisbury was taken prisoner. With the comparatively small force under his command, Artevelde saw that it was hopeless to attempt to take Tournay by storm, or to starve it into surrender: as soon, therefore, as he heard of the disaster which had befallen the English and Yprois he retired, leaving garrisons in Helchin and neighbouring towns to prevent excursions from Tournay for the future.

so the
siege is
aban-
doned.

June.
Philip
attempts
the con-
quest of
Hainault.

The Captain of S. John could not long remain inactive. On the 7th of June he was again in the field. It had occurred to Philip of France that it was perhaps possible before Edward's arrival to conquer Hainault, whose Count had joined the English alliance in the previous year. But the Duke of Brabant, the Count of Guelders, and Artevelde hastened to his assistance; the French forces besieging Thun-l'Évêque above Tournay, at the junction of the Scheldt and the Scarpe, only escaped by the blunders of their enemies. The

Expedi-
tion of
Gantois
to aid the
Count.

Gantois returned home after an absence of only eighteen days.¹

But now the war was to be renewed in right earnest. On June 14 Edward won the great victory off Sluys, for which he was largely indebted to the timely aid of the merchant ships of Bruges, which came out and decided the battle.² If we may trust Froissart, here, as so often, our only informant, when the news of Edward's victory came to the forces still before Thun-l'Évêque the Count of Hainault disbanded his army, but took all the "grans signeurs" to Valenciennes, where he feasted them and did them great honour, "especially the Duke of Brabant and Jakemond d'Artevelle." There, in the midst of the marketplace, Artevelde addressed the lords and populace, showing Edward's right to the French throne, and how powerful the three provinces, Flanders, Hainault, and Brabant, would be if they were in one accord. His eloquence and "grant sens" were so effective that "all who heard him said that he had spoken well and from large

June 14.
English
naval
victory at
Sluys.

Reported
speech of
Artevelde
at Valen-
ciennes.

¹ *Froissart*, 1st version, Luce, ii. 30; MS. Amiens, *ib.* i. 491, puts Artevelde's force at 60,000,—a manifest exaggeration.

² "Supervenientibus Flammingis . . . fugam arripuerunt." Contin. W. Nangis, s.a. 1340.

experience, and was well worthy to govern the County of Flanders." ¹

General
meeting of
Edward's
allies at
Vilvoorden
to decide
upon the
plan of
operations.

Meanwhile Edward, after receiving at Bruges the congratulations of his queen and of two échevins of Ghent, Thomas de Vaernewyck and Jean Uutenhove, had gone on pilgrimage to the famous church of Our Lady at Aardenburg. Here, on June 30, he was met by Artevelde, who accompanied him back to Bruges.² It was determined that an assembly of allies should be held at Vilvoorden, near Brussels, to consider the plan of the next campaign. "There came together John of Brabant, William of Hainault, Renaud of Guelders, William of Juliers, Louis of Brandenburg (son of the Emperor Louis IV.), and many lords of the Low Countries, who were joined by Artevelde and the deputies of the towns of Brabant,

¹ First version, ed. Luce, ii. 39. ". . . . et remonstra quelz drois li rois d'Engleterre avoit à la calenge de France et ossi quel poissance li troi pays avoient, Flandres, Haynau, et Braibant, quant il estoient d'un accord et d'une alliance ensamble. Et fist tant adonc par ses paroles et par son grant sens, que toutes manières de gens qui l'oient et entendirent, disent qu'il avoit durement bien parlet et par grant expérience, et en fa de tous moult loés et prisies et disent qu'il estoit bien digne de gouverner et excerser le conti de Flandres."

² *Ib.* I have followed the chronology of Lettenhove rather than that of Froissart, who makes the king go to Ghent immediately after Aardenburg. But this is contradicted by the evidence of *Comptes*.

Flanders, and Hainault, three or four from each." It was agreed that an attempt should first be made to take Tournay. Its capture would be equally advantageous to Edward and to his Flemish allies, for, as Jehan le Bel remarks,¹ "If they took Tournay they could go through France at their pleasure, as far as Compiègne and Choisi, and the Flemings could easily take Lille and Douai."

Of the siege of Tournay, and the operations simultaneously carried on in other parts of the county, wearisome details have been given by Froissart and the chroniclers. But all that concerns the Flemings may be quickly said. Two large armies were raised ; one from Ghent and Bruges, sent to the siege of Tournay, and one somewhat smaller from Ypres, Cassel, Poperinghe, and Bergues, sent under the command of Robert d'Artois against S. Omer.² About the same time Simon de Mirabel, one of the most powerful of those feudal lords who had remained on the Clauwaert³ or anti-French side, was chosen *Rewaert*, or Regent of Flanders, that

Siege of
Tournay

Flemish
towns
raise two
armies :
one
against
Tournay,
the other
against
S. Omer ;
and choose
Simon de
Mirabel
Rewaert.

¹ I. 175.

² *Chron. de Flandre* [ed. Sauvage 1559, p. 154].

³ The party of the *claw*, of the Flemish lion.

No such
office
ever held
by
Artevelde.

the county might not be without some central authority during the absence of its prince, who had now thrown in his lot entirely with Philip of Valois.¹ It is significant that about this time a niece of the Rewaert was married to Artevelde's brother William, Watergrave of Flanders.² To Artevelde himself the earlier writers of this century were wont to give this title Rewaert, but for this there is not the slightest contemporary evidence. Artevelde held no higher official position than that of commander-in-chief of the forces of Ghent.

Exploits
of the
Flemings
before
Tournay.

Tournay was invested on all sides, Artevelde being stationed on the left bank of the Scheldt, before the gate of S. Fontaine, in the direction of Courtray. The Flemings distinguished themselves by the vigour with which they attacked the city. They collected a small fleet on the Scheldt, rowed up to the town, and endeavoured with axes and battering-rams to break down the barbican; the garrison sallied

¹ Li Muisis, *Corp.* ii. 226. "Comes Flandriae Ludovicus fuit semper cum domino rege Franciae, a principis guerrae usque dum vitam finivit."

² Pauw. xlv., according to whom also Artevelde married his eldest daughter to the lord of Erpe, and his eldest son Jean to the daughter of Sobier of Courtray, lord of Tronchiennes.

forth in vessels to meet them, and repulsed their assaults with equal energy. One attack is said to have been so persevering that it lasted the whole of the day, and every lord and knight in Tournay took part in the defence. But the Flemings were unsuccessful; they lost a ship and more than a hundred and twenty men; so that, as Froissart quaintly says, "they returned home in the evening very tired."¹

Meanwhile, a French force under the Duke of Burgundy, which had come to the help of S. Omer, and had attacked the Flemings under Robert d'Artois, had been repulsed. But the victors had been seized soon afterwards with an unaccountable panic, and most of the men had fled to their homes. Robert, with the debris of his force, joined the main body before Tournay.

Failure
of the
attack on
S. Omer.

In September, Philip had brought up his army and had posted it at Bouvines; but Edward had taken up so strong a position that the French king hesitated to attack him: the siege dragged on, enlivened only by those knightly feats which Froissart delights to record. Nearly eleven weeks

¹ First version, ed. Luce, ii. 46, 47; Vatican MS. *ib.* 233.

had passed, and still Tournay was untaken. Edward's resources were exhausted, and his ministers were unable to send any additional supplies of money. So, on September 25, he consented, through the mediation of the sister of Philip, Jeanne de Valois, Countess-dowager of Hainault, to the Truce of Esplechin, so called from the village church in which it was signed.

Sept. 25.
Truce of
Esplechin.

Story of
Arte-
velde's
protest
against the
abandon-
ment of
the
Flemings.

According to a comparatively trustworthy authority, Artevelde had come before Edward and the princes while negotiations were proceeding: "Take care what kind of a peace you make, for, if we are not included and all our requests granted, we will not leave this place, nor will we free you from the oaths you have sworn to us." To which the Countess-dowager of Hainault replied: "God forbid that for the word of a villein all the noble blood of Christendom should be spilt."¹ The story is not without probability; if true, it curiously illustrates the way in which neighbouring princes regarded Artevelde. Edward, acquainted with English institutions, possibly treated the popular leader with more consideration.

¹ *Chron. de Flandre*, ed. Sauvage, 162. Same story with different details in *Chron. de Berne*, quoted Lett. *F. oiss.* iii. 507.

If Artevelde had found it necessary to protest against the conclusion of a truce which would leave the Flemings at Philip's mercy, his protest was successful. Three days later Philip signed a declaration renouncing all letters, bulls, instruments, &c., in virtue of which he was able to put Flanders under interdict, and recalled and annulled all previous sentences pronounced on Flanders.¹ He further promised to give up to the Flemings at Tournay, within a week, all letters, bulls, procurations, &c., containing these sentences, and to cause them to be annulled by the Pope before Laetare Sunday.

Philip renounces his power to put Flanders under interdict, and annuls previous sentences.

Flanders had not, it is true, regained its lost territory, but it had freed itself from the subjection to the King of France in which the treaties of Melun, of Athies, and of Arques had placed it. Artevelde, successful in his main object, having gained for the people "Vriheden ende Neeringhen," at once returned to Ghent, and gave the assembled townsfolk an account of the siege and truce. On October 7 the échevins, before the people in the Town Hall, tore in pieces the bulls and instruments given up by Philip.²

The work of liberation accomplished.

¹ *Chron. de Fl.*, *ib.*, understands this to include the obligation to pay tribute. Text in Gilliodts, *Invent. Arch. Bruges*, i. 492.

² *Comptes de Gand*, in *Lett. Hist.* iii. 270, n 2. "Doe worden alle

The Count
promises
to govern
with the
advice of
the three
good
towns.

Very shortly the Count, who had returned with James van Artevelde to Flanders, issued from Courtray a declaration confirming all that had been done, ratifying the acts of the Rewaert, and promising to govern in future with the counsel of the three good towns.¹ The country might now expect to enjoy its hard-won prosperity.

de instrumente ghecasseert, duersneden ten scepenen huus ute voer de goede lieden van de poort."

¹ "Item, dat wij ons regieren, gouverneren ende beleden willen van al te al bi den rade van onsen goeden lieden van onsen lande van Vlaendren vorseit." Lett. *J. d'A.* 87, n.

III.

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES. INTERNAL DISSENSIONS. DEATH OF ARTEVELDE.

"The citizen in the full sense is defined by nothing so well as 'participation in the administration of justice and the offices of government.'"—Aristotle, *Politics*, iii. 1.

THE characteristic feature of the constitution of Flanders in the fifteenth and later centuries is the organisation of the county in the "Four Members."¹ Warnkoenig, who alone has subjected Flemish history to scientific investigation, has referred the origin of this arrangement to the fifteenth century, while on the other hand native historians pretty generally attribute its creation to James van Artevelde, and deem it his chief claim

Organisa-
tion of the
county
under
Four
Members;

ascribed
by Belgian
writers to
Artevelde,

¹ Upon the whole subject of "The Members of Flanders," I have followed the conclusions of Gilliodts in the fourth volume (1878) of the *Invent. Arch. Bruges*, 264, *seq.*, whence most of the following quotations are taken.

but rather
the result
of a
gradual
develop-
ment.

to distinction. Thus, Lettenhove assigns it to the year 1338, and states positively that it was instituted under Artevelde's inspiration at the assembly of Eeckhout. For his authority he refers to the account-books of Ghent, in which the meeting is indeed mentioned but without any account of what was done there. Had it ~~been~~ the creation of a particular moment some record of the fact would probably have been preserved, yet when the rights of Bruges and Ypres as "Members" were questioned in 1436 they were unable to furnish any proof that these powers had at any time been definitely conferred upon them. It may therefore be conjectured that the system was the result of a long development, rather than of any distinct constituting act.

The early "keures," or charters, of most of the Flemish towns had been modelled on that of Arras. It had therefore been expressly provided, *e.g.* in the keure of Bruges about 1189, that in case of conflict with the officers of the Count the échevins of that town were to be consulted. But in 1191 Artois ceased to be part of the county; the appeal seems then to have been transferred to that assembly of échevins of Flanders, "Scabini Flandriae," which

had already appeared early in the same century.¹

This assembly, of which there are frequent notices in the next century, was composed of the échevins of the five good towns,—Ghent, Bruges, Ypres, Lille, Douai,—and formed, not a definite court of justice, but rather a board of arbitration, guarding the liberties of the municipalities. “The échevins of Flanders” becomes a wonted phrase; the town account-books are full of the travelling expenses of their magistrates “ad comitem et ad scabinos Flandriae,” or “ad tractandum cum scabinis Flandriae.”² In 1303 we find this body issuing regulations of maritime law. About the same time, Philip de Thiette recognises fully “that when any dispute arises between the Count and any of the five good towns, or any debate between the échevins of one town and those of another, the other four towns have, and of right ought to have, the cognisance of that matter, and judgment thereon.”³ To this body, moreover, the charter of Bruges in the following year gave jurisdiction in cases where

The
assembly
of
échevins
of
Flanders

acting as a
board of
arbitra-
tion.

¹ In 1115 the Provost of S. Donatian 'at Bruges “damna ecclesiae suae illata restaurat . . . fere coram cunctis Flandriae scabinis . . . convocatis.”

² Many examples in Gilliodts, iv. 267.

³ *Ib.* 269.

the échevins were accused of wrongful judgment. It was out of this representative assembly of échevins of Flanders, transformed from a judicial into an administrative body, that the organisation of the Four Members apparently arose.

The
"three
good
towns."

By the treaty of Athies, Flanders lost Lille and Douai, so that henceforth the good towns were but three in number; of the fourth Member, the Franc of Bruges, more will be said hereafter.

Addition
of
councillors
to the
assembly,
which
becomes
known as
"parle-
ment."

Soon after the loss of those two towns, we notice the presence of councillors and other delegates at the meeting, which now begins to be called a "parlement." Thus the account-books of each of the three towns contain many entries of payments made to persons "sent with the échevins and councillors to parlement."¹ By the addition of this new element, the number present must have been largely increased, and the character of the assembly must at the same time have tended to become less judicial and more political and deliberative.

The importance of the three towns must have

¹ Gilliodts, iv. 270. *Comptes de Bruges*, 1304. "Tanne den L varende met schepenen ende rade ende hondert manne te Riſele ten parlemente."

grown with the rise of the Hanse of London : Bruges was the chief place of that confederation ; from Bruges was chosen the Count of the Hanse, and there the common chest was kept ; while from Ypres was chosen the Scildrake. And while these owed their power to their commercial greatness, the growth of its manufacturing industry had rapidly placed Ghent in a position of equality and even of superiority.

The authority of the three good towns in the fourteenth century rested on three bases,—judicial, financial, and military. Of these the most important was their *judicial supremacy*. In the charters of all the smaller towns it was provided that in questions to which no answer could be found in the words of the grant, they should take counsel with the échevins of some appointed towns as “their chief,” “haer’ hoofd.” This reference to another échevinage was known as “aller à kief,” or “à chef de sens.” Gradually the three chief towns acquired *appellate jurisdiction* over the “smalle steden” around. Thus among the towns of which Bruges was “chef de sens” were Damme, Sluys¹ and Aardenburg ; while

Bases
of the
authority
of the
three
towns :—

I.
Judicial
supre-
macy :
appellate
jurisdic-
tion.

¹ Gilliodts, *Inv.* i, 26, No. 58. “Lett. van dat de stede van Brucghe hoft es der Sluys.”

Ghent, by a charter of 1302, received power to nominate échevins in, and hear appeals from, Grammont and the Quatre Metiers.¹

II. Financial
preponder-
ance. Secondly: to secure a fair apportionment of the payments to be made to the King of France in accordance with the treaty of Athies, in 1309 the "Transport" was introduced—a term fruitful of error, but meaning merely a register fixing the amount each town had to pay. In this the *financial preponderance* of the three towns was well marked. While of every hundred livres Ghent paid fourteen, Bruges fifteen, and Ypres ten, one other town only, Alost, is assessed as high as six, and one only as high as four.

III. Military
command. This authority and influence were increased by the military organisation; for the little towns and villages had not only to submit to the appellate jurisdiction of their "chief," they were also bound to follow its banner in war.

Such was the organisation which Artevelde found when he rose to power. But during the period of

¹ Cf. keure of 1242. "Ad scabinos Gandenses, salvo jure imperii, consilium debent accipere, tanquam ad caput suum." Warnk. *GA* ii. 287-8.

his leadership a new element was introduced into the assembly. Originally it had, as before remarked, consisted exclusively of "the échevins of Flanders," *i.e.* of the three good towns: in the early years of the century councillors had begun to take a place among them; it was therefore not so difficult to secure the entrance of representatives of the artisan guilds.¹ In most of the parliaments of this period there is mention of the presence of several deans,—among them usually the dean of the weavers. Even here we have no evidence to justify us in ascribing the change to the Captain of S. John. Yet it was the outcome of that democratic movement—or, to be more accurate, that movement on the part of the craft guilds to obtain political power—of which Artevelde was the representative. Its full significance cannot be estimated till we have examined the constitutional reforms in Ghent itself.

In the time of Artevelde representatives of the craft guilds introduced

It is possible, however, that during the time of Artevelde's influence, the union between the great towns became closer, now that the popular element was victorious in each, and also that to the same

Possible further changes.

¹ Gilliodts, *u.s.* iv. 288.

period is to be referred the first distinct recognition by foreign powers of the arrangement under the three "heads." Thus the English kings had on previous occasions written to the separate towns, *e.g.* in 1319 to Damme, Nieupoort, and Dunkirk, but from 1338 onward they treat only with the three good towns.¹

Change in
the con-
stitution
of Ghent:
L'Espinoy's
account;

All the accounts which later historians give of the changes in the constitution of Ghent are based on the statement of L'Espinoy. Under the year 1340 (1341, N.S) he writes: "In February, James van Artevelde ordained that the town of Ghent should be divided into three Members by which the said city should be governed—of which the noblesse should be the first, the guilds in general the second, and the weavers alone the third."² Most subsequent writers have echoed this account without further inquiry, *e.g.* Diericx, who, however, substituted the term "rentiers" for "noblesse,"³ Warnkoenig,⁴ and Lettenhove. We have already seen that since

¹ Moke, *Rev. Nat.* iv. 344.

² *Recherches*, 454. It will be shown later that L'Espinoy probably attributed to the elder, the measures of the younger, Artevelde.

³ *Mem. sur la ville de Gand*, i. 183.

⁴ III. 131.

1325 an attempt had been made by the burgher aristocracy to gain the support of the fullers and of the lesser crafts, by recognising their Deans as town officers. If then the change under Artevelde was of the character described, it was little more than the substitution of the weavers for the fullers, and the further development of an arrangement, the germ of which already existed. Had this been so, it would be difficult to explain the bitter hatred felt toward Artevelde by such men as Jehan le Bel ; nor can the tradition of revolution, however exaggerated, which is associated with his name, be entirely devoid of foundation. Artevelde was certainly considered in his lifetime the champion of the craftsmen ; and when we remember that it had been the *weavers' guild* which had led the artisans in their struggle against the town oligarchy, and that severe repressive measures had been employed against them during the last few years, we might infer a priori that Artevelde would give them a share of political power. This inference is confirmed by an examination of the account-books of Ghent during this period. The Deans of the Fullers and of the Small Trades retain their places, but by their side is placed the Dean

if this be true, the weavers only placed in position previously held by the fullers ; and the hatred of the upper classes for Artevelde inexplicable.

A prior argument.

Dean of Weavers placed by side of Deans of Fullers and Small Crafts.

These
bodies
become
the Three
Members
of the
town.

Monopoly
of office
by the
"lignages"
destroyed.

of the Weavers from 1338 onward.¹ And there is one piece of evidence which is entirely conclusive. The entry for 1339 begins: "Three receivers of the duty were appointed, viz., *the three deans of the three members* of the town, Willem Yoens, Jan van den Vloed, and Jan van Dessele"; while the draft, which is still extant, calls them "*the three deans of guilds*," and a few pages later the same names are mentioned as the Deans of the Lesser Guilds, of the Weavers and of the Fullers.² There is, moreover, no mention of a Dean of the *poortery* or *ledichganghers*; so that the conclusion is inevitable that the Weavers, Fullers, and Small Trades, formed the Three Members of the town, and that to be eligible for office the poorters had to enter one or other of these. On account of their wealth and dignity, the "majores" would still have great influence, and would fill most of the

¹ Compte of 1342. "Dekene en Beleedere: van den Weve Ambachte, Pieter Mabensone 12*l.*; van den Volle Ambachte, Jan de Bake 12*l.*; van den Clenen Neerenghen, Peter Zoetard 12*l.*" Quoted in Pauw. *Consp. d'Aud.* xxxii.-xxxiii.

² Vanderk. *Siecle*, 165. Representatives of these three bodies accompanied the men of Audenarde in 1342 in an expedition to destroy the implements of cloth manufacture in the surrounding districts—Pauw. xxxix.: and the three deans commanded the expedition of 1342. *Ib.* xlix.

offices as before ; but they were no longer irresponsible, for their monopoly of political power had been destroyed.

In fact, there is at once a notable change in the *échevinage*. Up to this time the *échevins* had been elected from among the members of a small group of great families. This was especially the case with the office of first *échevin* of the *keure*, which would seem to have been almost monopolised by the Vaernewycks, the Maschs, and the Borluuts. But in 1338 a new name appears, and in 1340 the office is held by Jan van den Vloed, who, as we have seen, had been Dean of the Weavers in the previous year.¹

New men
become
échevins,

Nor was this the limit of democratic change: it is probable that during this period the *échevins* were elected *directly* by all the inhabitants, instead of by four representatives of the Count and four of the citizens, as ordained by the *keure* of 1301.²

probably
elected by
the whole
body of
people.

Everywhere in Western Europe a like struggle was going on. In some places the guilds gained only a small share in the government ; in others their victory was, in theory at least, complete, and the members of the old citizen-class had to enrol themselves in the

This
movement
common to
Western
Europe,

¹ Vanderk. *Siecle*, u.s.

² *Ib.* 205 and n 6.

and
explains
Arte-
velde's
position
and re-
putation.

guilds. Till recently the history of James van Artevelde has been treated as an isolated episode in the patriotic Flemish struggle against the centralising French monarchy ; or as one of many instances of the turbulence of the mob in general, or of the Gantois in particular. But if the above explanation be correct, we have at once the key to his history. Unfortunately the lack of evidence leaves us ignorant as to the exact share taken by Artevelde in these changes ; but it is at any rate certain that it was during the period of his influence in Ghent that the artisans gained their victory. And not in Ghent alone : it is almost certain that a similar change took place in Bruges and Ypres. This explains the hatred with which Jehan le Bel,—from whom is borrowed the whole of Froissart's first version,—regarded him. The canon of Liège, member of a great "lignage," delighting in all the pomp of the chivalry of his time, could not regard with favour the leader in a neighbouring city of a movement similar to that which had shortly before been successful in his own. In Ghent a peculiar conjunction of circumstances had led many of the great families to acquiesce in Artevelde's measures. But when

liberty had been rewon, and the King of France offered them good terms, their attitude was likely to change. If such an account of Artevelde's policy be accepted, his fall will not appear so utterly inexplicable as has previously been thought.

The real character of the movement within the towns is illustrated by the history of Audenarde, upon which recent investigations have thrown considerable light. The government had been in the hands of a small class, called here, as elsewhere, *ledichgangers*; ¹ there had been a long struggle between the oligarchy and the guilds; and Ghent, the "chef de sens," was again and again obliged to send a military force to restore order. Thus for instance in 1326, when in Ghent itself the poorters still held their ground, two échevins were sent to quiet the discord between "the good folk of the town" ² *i.e.* the ruling class, and the fullers; and when their efforts proved unsuccessful, a force of seven hundred men was sent to overawe the populace.

Auden-
arde

struggle
between
the
magnates
and the
artisans.

Interven-
tion of
Ghent.

Artevelde's elevation to power in Ghent seems to have been coincident in time with a rising of

¹ Pauw. *Consp. d' Aud.* viii, xxi.

² "Den goeden lieden van den Port." *Ib.* xxxiii.

the craftsmen in Audenarde ; for in February 1339 the Gantois sent an échevin to govern the city as captain-general,—not, as before, to restore the rule of the “good folk,” but to “protect” them.¹ In the following months repeated journeys of échevins and captains are recorded in the account-books of Ghent. The true remedy for these disturbances was to grant to the guilds in Audenarde, as in Ghent, some share in their own government. The treaty of Esplechin had been signed ; Artevelde’s foreign policy had been rewarded with signal success. On its homeward march the army of Ghent halted at Audenarde : a council of fifteen citizens was nominated, probably for the provisional government of the town,² and in a very short time a new civic constitution seems to have been established. As far as can be gathered, the town was divided into Three Members as in Ghent. The first apparently consisted of the weavers,³ of the merchants, and of

1340.
Constitutional
change
probably
under
Arte-
velde’s
direction.

Division
into Three
Members
as at
Ghent.

¹ Pauw. *Consp. d’Aud.* xxxiv.

² Compte. “Item van gescriften die ment Audenarde scriven dede doe onse goede lieden daer laghen int wederkeeren van den here voer Doernike ende de xv persooene ghemaect waren, xls.” *Ib.* xxxvi. n. 1.

³ Pauw. is not definite on this point. He says, xxxii. : “Le premier membre était le corps des Marchands,” and on the next page, “Les Tisserands paraissent avoir fait partie de ce membre.”

all who belonged to no other trade guild. The other two members were the fullers and the small crafts. Thus Audenarde, a town in the quarter of Ghent, had been organised in the same way as Ghent itself, and the reform had taken place during the presence in the town of Artevelde and his army.

Guillaume de Mortagne, the Seigneur d'Audenarde, *i.e.* of the châteltenie, had, like most of the greater barons, joined the army of Philip, and his dignities had been sequestered. To govern the châteltenie, as well as to preserve order in the town, Lambert Mondekin was appointed by the Gantois in the name of the "country of Flanders" to an office, which from the various titles, "hooftman," "capitaine," "beleeder" may be conjectured similar to that of Artevelde in Ghent.¹ The whole matter is very obscure; but it would appear that most of the échevins still belonged to the ruling class, and that the struggle between them and the artisans continued scarcely less violently. Mondekin, whose conduct was marked throughout by timidity and indecision, was little fitted for so difficult a position. But when in 1341 his request for a body-guard of twenty men was refused

Lambert
Mondekin
appointed
Captain
by the
Gantois.

The
échevins
refuse his
request for
a guard.

¹ Pauw. xxxviii.

Renewed
nterven-
tion of
Ghent.

by the échevins, he collected in a moment of temporary vigour a small force of adherents, got possession of the keys of the town, and sent to Ghent for help.¹ Next day two Ghent captains and two deans appeared, followed by a company of archers. The town council under the influence now brought to bear upon them, consented to the guard; and the Ghent commanders ordered that it should be composed of *craftsmen*, and paid from the forfeited property of fugitives, *i.e.* Leliaerts. At the same time it was decided that a guard of twenty men should be chosen to protect the châteltenie.

Probable
policy of
Mondekin.

As the body-guard was to consist of artisans, we may conjecture that Lambert Mondekin had endeavoured to defend the cause of the craftsmen and, indeed, that he had from the first been appointed to defend the new constitution.

After the signature of the truce of Esplechin, Edward had hastened to England to bring Archbishop Stratford and his other ministers to account for what he deemed their financial mismanagement.²

¹ Pauw. xxxiv., xl. It will be remembered that Artevelde, on being appointed captain, had been furnished with a body-guard of twenty-one men.

² Cf. Stubbs, *Const. Hist.* ii. 385, *seq.*

Before leaving port he had written on November 18 (1340) to his allies of Flanders, explaining his sudden withdrawal from the country. He thanks the "dear and well-beloved burgomasters, échevins, captains and councillors of Ghent, Bruges, Ypres and the other good towns of Flanders, and all the commonalty of the land of Flanders," for their aid, and prays them to remain firm in their alliance. To excuse his "hasty manner" of going to England, he explains that some of his councillors had acted in such a way that if he did not apply a remedy soon he would be unable to carry out the covenants agreed on with his allies.¹

Nov.
Edward's
hasty
return to
England.

During Edward's absence the truce, originally only to last till June 24, 1341, was prolonged to August 29, 1342. In the summer of that year Edward renewed his preparations, apparently intending to begin the next campaign with the conquest of Artois. During September the town forces, which in the case of Ghent appear from the account-books to have numbered only 2,605 men,² and therefore were probably not

Prolonga-
tion of the
truce.

¹ *Messenger des Sciences*, Gand. 1835, iii. 450.

² Pauw. xlii. No. 1.

1342.
Movements
of the
communal
troops in
French
Flanders.

more than 8,000 in all,—figures which may be usefully compared with the exaggerated estimates of Froissart,—marched through “Flandre Gallicant,” and occupied the fortresses of Bergues, Cassel and Gravelines. But still Edward did not come. It

The wife
of Arte-
velde sent
to hasten
Edward’s
arrival,

was determined, therefore, to send over to England as ambassadress the wife of the man who was most closely identified with the English alliance.¹ Edward had already left England for Brittany when the “Jongvrowe Kateline” arrived: she at once followed him, and after many perils reached his camp. The Countess of Montfort was sister of the Count of Flanders; it is pleasant to read that at the very time when Louis was scheming to overthrow Artevelde, the Countess sent four sergeants to escort “the lady Catherine” to the English army. Her chief object of course was to induce Edward to hasten to Flanders, but she also seems to have requested the payment of

¹ Lettenhove, *Hist.* iii. 275, n 5, quotes *Compte* of 1342. “Item ghaven sy van costen die jonkfro Kateline, Jacobs wyf van Artevelde en die met haere waren ten tyd dat soe was in Ingelant,” etc. All the communal *Comptes* mention this embassy, and the expense of sending messengers to her, e.g. Ypres: “Item à Jehan Linvaël pour un message envoiet à Norevelle à le femme Jake d’Artevelde.” *Ib.* 276, n 1.

certain moneys, which may have been arrears of the subsidy promised by the English king, or sums lent to him by the towns. She obtained a small amount of money ; but in her main purpose she was unsuccessful. The alliance of Flanders was secure ; on the other hand, to prevent Brittany from falling under the influence of Philip of Valois prompt and vigorous action was necessary. It was in this direction therefore that Edward's energy and resources were henceforward applied, and operations were not renewed from the side of Flanders during Artevelde's lifetime.

who was
occupied
in
Brittany,
so
Flanders
neglected.

In the truce of Malestroit, January 19, 1343, to last till Michaelmas 1346, the Flemings as allies of Edward were included ; two articles specially relate to them. The cardinal legates who had negotiated the truce promised to use all their efforts to gain for them full absolution, for Clement VI. had, as late as October, 1342, declared that if they did not return to their alliance to Philip at once, he would excommunicate them. It was also provided that the Count of Flanders should be permitted to dwell in his principality during the truce, "as immediate lord but not as sovereign

1343.
Jan. 19.
Truce of
Malestroit.
Clauses
relating to
Flanders.

lord,"¹ a phrase dexterously leaving open the question who that sovereign lord might be.

1342. Aug.
Return of
the Count.

The Count of Flanders had already re-entered his dominions, and made another attempt to gain by craft what he had failed to recover through the might of France. In August he had returned to his castle of Male: among the many deputations of magistrates which went to salute him was one from the neighbouring city, Bruges, and in this appears the name of the échevin Francis van Artevelde, almost certainly the brother of the Captain of S. John.²

That the Count had returned could not remain unknown to Edward. He therefore sent over William Trussell to confirm the fidelity of the good towns. If their alliance was ever in danger, the efforts of Edward's ambassador were successful: in a parliament at Damme on November 9, at which the Count and Trussell were both present, the

¹ Li Muisis, *Corp.* ii. 235. "Item propter absolutionem Flaminorum et propter sententias quas incurrerent, cardinales laborabunt sollicitè quod absolutionem habeant et quod bona et opportuna sit inventa. Item, comes Flandriae *tanquam dominus sine medio non tanquam superior* remaneat in Flandria durantibus treugis, et in hoc consentiat populus Flandrensis."

² Pauw. xliv.

representatives of the towns declared their intention to remain true to their engagements. Three weeks later the échevins of the good towns wrote to Trussell, that after deliberate consultation with "the common land of Flanders" they had determined "to hold and accomplish for ever the alliances made between our lord the king and the land of Flanders."¹ Meanwhile Count Louis was secretly scheming. In Tournay had gathered a large number of banished Leliaerts ready for any venture. Audenarde was still seething with party struggles, and the captain placed there by Ghent had shown his utter incapacity. If, by a rising within the town, the Ledichanghers with their allies the fullers could co-operate with an attack from outside, it might be possible to get possession of the place. Thus a Leliaert garrison would be planted in the heart of the country, and Ghent would be cut off from Artois and the south whence it obtained its

Nov.
The towns
declare
their at-
tachment
to the
English
alliance.

Dec.
Failure of
a Leliaert
plot to
surprise
Aude-
narde.

¹ There is no direct evidence that the Count was present at the meeting and sought to induce the communes to abandon the English alliance, but their letter says, "les bones gens de Flandres furent très-esmeus pour aucun novelletés que furent attemptés aux contraire des alliances faites entre le roy et le dit pays de Flandres;" and we know from a dated charter that the Count was then at Damme. Moke, *Rev. Nat.* iv. 346, n 1.

supply of provisions.¹ The middle of December was the time fixed. But Artevelde was on the alert, and the plot failed: a large force, including not only the four captains of parishes with their "valets," but also detachments of the Three Members, was sent from Ghent, and easily gained possession of the town.² On the second day of January, more than a fortnight before the truce of Malestroit, the Count, now that his plans had miscarried, left the county.³ He had pretended to accept the alliance with England and the constitutional changes in the county itself; when he returns, it is as a declared enemy.

So, Jan. 2,
the Count
leaves
Flanders.

For many months we have no information concerning Flemish affairs. It was at the beginning of the following year that the first attempt was made

¹ As usual the weavers were prominent on one side, while the Lediengangers were assisted by the fullers. Pauw. liv. The leaders of the Lelieaerts appear, from the accounts given *ib.* lxxiii.-lxxx., to have been members of neighbouring seigneurial houses or of the échevinal families of Audenarde. They commenced their operations by violently seizing the banners of several craftguilds. *ib.* cxxviii. *seq.*

² An inquiry into the recent disturbances was held by a commission from the three great towns; and a small force of thirty-nine craftsmen of Ghent under the command of three captains remained in the town for a few days to preserve order. *ib.* cxlii.-cxliv.

³ *ib.* xlv.

within Ghent itself to destroy Artevelde's power. A certain rich citizen, Jean de Steenbeke, accused him of plotting the subjection of all Flanders to his dictatorial rule. Steenbeke and his friends took up arms, but the craftsmen rallied round Artevelde, and contingents hurried up to his defence from Bruges, Ypres, and Courtray. The magistrates of Ghent had already intervened, and Steenbeke and Artevelde had submitted to their authority; they were to abide the one in the castle, the other in the hotel of Gerard le Diable, till the charges had been examined. The accusations were declared unfounded; Artevelde was restored to liberty, Steenbeke condemned to fifty years' exile.¹

1344.
First
attempt in
Ghent to
overthrow
Arte-
velde.

He is
accused of
self-seek-
ing, but
defended
by the
artisans.

We may with considerable probability regard this as a first attempt of the Leliaert members of the "haute-bourgeoisie" to rid themselves of a man who had introduced democratic changes into the government of the city, and whose help was no longer required to gain freedom from the exactions of the Count and the King of France. Steenbeke, like the other great burghers, had acquiesced in Artevelde's rule while necessary, and had, a few weeks after

Probable
explan-
ation of the
episode.

¹ Lettenh. *J. d'A.* 94.

Artevelde's election as captain, accompanied Jacques Masch on his journey to Dordrecht for wool. It may, indeed, have been merely a personal quarrel, but the charge against Artevelde, and the support given to him by the artisans,—sixteen banners, it is said, were displayed in the market-place,—point to some deeper reason.¹

It has been repeatedly pointed out that liberty could only arise in the form of privilege, and privilege tended to become monopoly. Thus we find the chief cities of Flanders jealously guarding against the infringement of their rights of manufacture, and the surrounding small towns and villages forbidden to make more cloth than they needed for their own wear. Nothing is more frequent in the internal history of the cities than records of expeditions to destroy the weaving implements in the small towns of the neighbourhood. And exactly in the same way as the struggle of the craft guilds against the "poorterie" had, in earlier years, thrown the artisans on the side of the Count, so now Louis was able to

Struggle of
the small
towns
against the
manufac-
turing
monopoly
of the
greater
utilised by
the Count.

¹ Moke, *Rev. Nat.* iv. 251, though mistaken as to the exact nature of the constitutional changes at Ghent, says well that the real quarrel was not between Artevelde and Steenbeke, but between the captain of the commune and the "grande bourgeoisie."

utilise the enmity of the lesser towns against the greater. The men of Poperinghe declared, in September, 1344, that they would no longer recognise the monopoly of Ypres; but they were defeated in a bloody battle, their leader and most of his followers slain, and the cloth manufacture suppressed everywhere in the district.

More important was the action of Termonde, in the quarter of Ghent. "The town of Termonde rebelled," says the chronicler,¹ "against the dominion of the Gantois, because Ghent wished to prevent their making cloth as they had from of old. Wherefore they turned to the Count, and received into the town a captain and many armed men sent by him. The Count intended by means of that place, unless the Flemings would humble themselves to receive him, to conquer them and recover his land by the aid of his friends." Louis had already made an alliance with the Duke of Brabant, long lukewarm in his adherence to the English cause,—an alliance which was to remain secret until the towns had been brought to obedience.²

1345.
April-
May.

Termonde
rebels
against
Ghent,
and is
aided by
the Count.

¹ *Chron. Comit. Fland., Corp.* i. 216.

² "Quousque magnae villae concordaverint." Notes to Lett. *Froiss.* iv. 468.

Within Ghent the prosperity of the last few years was departing ; the constant strain upon the financial resources of the town had at last exhausted them.

Financial
exhaustion
of Ghent.

Recourse was had to all possible means of raising money: loans were made by the abbeyes and the wealthier citizens ; and it would even seem that the magistrates bought goods on credit in other towns, and sold them to gain a little ready money to maintain the struggle.¹ Heavier taxes had to be imposed, thus creating discontent, of which the Count's partisans did not fail to take advantage. About the same time as the men of the Count entered Termonde, an émeute broke out in Ghent.

May 2.
Quaden
Maendag.
Battle
between
Fullers
and
Weavers
in Ghent.
Weavers
triumph-
ant by the
aid of
Arte-
velde.

To borrow again from the chronicler before quoted :
"On the second day of May the weavers fought against the fullers and all the other artisans in the market-place ; the weavers prevailed, and almost five hundred of their enemies were slain. The leader of the weavers was Gerhard Denys, who was assisted by James van Artevelde :² Jean Bake, Dean of the Fullers, led their opponents ; he fell on the field with

¹ Huytens, *Recherches sur les Corporations Gantoises*, 28 seq.

² "Cui se sociavit Jacobus de Artevelde." *Chron. Com., Corpus* i. 215. Cf. ". . . et fuit Jacobus de Artevelde ex parte textorum." Li Muisis, *ib.* ii. 237.

his sons and the others above mentioned. The fullers wished to have for each cloth four 'grossi' more than they were wont to receive. But the weavers and those 'pannos facientes' unwilling to consent thereto, fought against them and triumphed. From this arose a great dissension in Ghent, so that the hearts of the craftsmen were turned against one another." Not without reason do later chroniclers call this *den Quaden Maendag*,—Bad Monday.

The Count meanwhile had been steadily pushing on. Allost had been taken; the Count and Philip had issued manifestoes, the latter probably promising the restitution of the occupied towns.¹ The peril was not unseen by Artevelde; frequent messengers were despatched to warn Edward of the danger. he ran of losing the Flemish alliance, and Artevelde again sent his wife to England to urge a speedy passage to Flanders. Edward had already sent Robert de Fiennes to cheer his allies, and on July 3, set sail himself from Sandwich with one hundred and thirty ships, "on account of some sudden news which have come to us concerning the loss of our land of Flanders, and of some of

Increasing
success of
the Count.

July.
Urged by
Arte-
velde,
Edward
visits
Flanders.

¹ Lett. Hist. iii. 289 seq. and ed. Froiss. iv. 467 seq.

July 16.
Sohier of
Courtray
chosen
Rewaert.

our lieges, unless we go thither in person." On the fifth Edward entered the Zwyn, on the seventh Artevelde met him at Sluys, on the eleventh a number of representatives of the towns, including Thomas de Vaernewyck, Jean Uutenhove, and Lieven de Waes from Ghent, consulted with him there, and on the sixteenth the deputies of the three good towns, assembled at Bruges, elected Sohier of Courtray, son of the Sohier executed in 1338, as Rewaert of Flanders.

The names of the deputies of Ghent at Sluys, and the choice of Sohier, seem to show that the feeling of hostility to the Count among some, at least, of the ruling families of the town was not yet extinct. They would not touch the title and rights of their lord, but they could choose one of themselves, on whom they could rely, to exercise the princely authority.

But Artevelde probably had a bolder policy, and it was at Sluys, according to Froissart and Villani, that the captain of S. John planned with Edward an attempt to make the Prince of Wales Count of Flanders. What probability there may be in this statement will be discussed later. It is necessary first to give an outline of events. On the nineteenth Edward issued a proclamation from

the Zwyn, wherein, after mentioning that Bruges had decided not to receive the Count unless he did homage to Edward and acknowledged that he held the county of him as King of France, he promises to recognise Louis as Count, if he will do so: "our intention is that if the Count or his heirs will not do homage, the government shall be administered by those who are now our allies and faithful to us, without infringing the rights of the Count." The reception Edward had met with from the deputies probably reassured him. The new Rewaert had shown his vigour by at once marching to Alost against the Leliaerts, and troops had been sent to besiege Termonde. The English king thought there was no longer any danger; on the twenty-second, he had his last conference with the deputies; Artevelde, on his homeward journey, was received with enthusiasm at Bruges and Ypres. On the twenty-fourth Edward set sail; the same day Artevelde was slain at Ghent.

July 19.
Edward's
proclama-
tion from
Sluys.

July 24.
Edward
departs.
Murder of
Artevelde.

The two questions of what may be called the Prince of Wales project,¹ and of the cause of Artevelde's death, though closely connected, may more

¹ V. Vanderk. *Sidde*, 36-43, to which little can be added.

The
Prince of
Wales
project.

conveniently be discussed apart. All the chroniclers of the period attribute to Artevelde the design to make the young Prince of Wales lord of Flanders in the stead of Count Louis. According to some the proposal was first made by Edward, according to others by Artevelde; some add that it was intended to turn the county into a duchy. But in the main there is absolute unanimity.¹ As Vander-

Unanimity
of Chron-
iclers,

¹ *Jehan le Bel*, ii. 35: Edward "proposa qu'il iroit luy mesmes en Flandres pour scavoir s'il pourroit avoir la conté pour le prince de Gales, ainsy que Jacquemart d'Artevelle autrefois lui en avoit parlé, lequel devoit tant faire aux bonnes villes de Flandres que quant il vendroit poissamment ou pays, ilz revirent leur seigneur et le feroient conte de Flandres."

Froissart; First Version, ed. Lett. iv. 313; "il promettoit au roy qu'il le feroit seigneur et hiretier de Flandre, et en revestiroit son fil le p. de G. et feroit-on de la conté de Flandre une ducé;" *MS. Amiens*, ib. 312, "car Dartevelle li promettoit qu'il le feroit seigneur de Flandre et le donroit à son aisnet fils et en feroit-on une ducé."

Chron. de Flandre, ed. Sauvage, 176, "Adonc manda le roy Edouard à Jacques de Hartevelde qu'il feist tant vers les Flamens que son fils fust receu en Flandres comme sire Lors assembla Jacques le commun de Gand et leur conseilla que grand profit auroient d'accorder la requeste, pour ce que le roy d'Angleterre avoit grand pouvoir an mer sur quoy plusieurs hommes du conseil du commun s'accorderent au conseil de Jacques, *mais les notables bourgeois le contredirent.*"

Li Muisis, Corp. ii. 237. "Rex petiit a Flandrensibus quod ipsi reciperent filium suum comitem Flandriae; et villae et totum consilium Flandriae consilio habito noluerunt consentire. Sed Jacobus de Artevelde volebat quod fieret voluntas regis quia ispe erat cum dicto rege et uxor sua cum thesauro suo in Anglia."

kindere well remarks, where there is such unanimous contemporary evidence, and so constant a tradition to the same effect, the account to be rejected must either be in itself incredible, or clearly contradicted by other ascertained facts. Almost all other Belgian writers, however, Moke being the only notable exception, have endeavoured to clear Artevelde's memory from what they deem a foul aspersion; even the democratic Gilliodts only ventures to suggest that perhaps Artevelde proposed the Prince of Wales as Rewaert, a theory refuted by the election of Sohier of Courtray. Lettenhove, in his many writings, is never weary of repeating that there is no mention of such a proposal in contemporary town archives. But until some definite decision had been arrived at, and while the proposal was being secretly discussed, there would be no need, and it would have been inexpedient, to embody it in formal documents. The same writer thought the final word was said when, in his recent edition of *Froissart*, he was able to give

rejected by
Belgian
historians.

Villani, viii. 122 (ed. 1803). "Adoardo arrivo alle Schiuse con intenzione et con ordine e con trattato colle communi di Fiandria di fare conte di Fiandra il figliuolo."

Among other foreign chronicles, cf. Chron. Bern. in Notes to Lett. *Froiss.* iv. 464.

Evidence of Edward's proclamation. the text of Edward's proclamation of July 19, and to point out that it makes no mention of any transference of the county to the Prince of Wales. This is true; but the document in question really proves nothing: it merely shows how unsatisfactory the state of things had become. The Count and his heirs were to have an indefinitely long period allowed them wherein to acknowledge Edward as suzerain; until this had been done, the government was to be in the hands of Edward's allies, *i.e.* the Rewaert assisted by the good towns. The English reader will notice the resemblance between this plan and that proposed by Sancroft for the government of England after the flight of James II. James's royal dignity was to be left intact, though he had left England and was plotting to regain his authority by force, but the Regent William of Orange was to govern the country. So, in the case of Flanders, there was to be a Count wandering about in France and Brabant, continually endeavouring to reconquer his county, which was to be ruled by the Rewaert and the Three Members. So absurd a scheme could not possibly work. A succession of exiled Counts whose rights were left intact, and of Rewaerts who

An English parallel.

had all real power, would have been as ridiculous as parallel lines of Stuart Kings and Orange Regents. Moreover, the title "Count of Flanders," was actually conferred by Henry VI. upon his uncle Humphrey of Gloucester,¹ so that the idea of gaining the county for a member of the royal family seems to have been by no means strange to English politicians. For the Flemings to choose another Count, with the consent of their sovereign was the natural way out of their difficulty in 1345; and it may be regarded as a proof of Artevelde's wisdom that he not only felt this, but also saw that to give that dignity to a son of Edward would be an effectual means of securing vigorous English support against France.

A later instance in Flanders.

Humphrey of Gloucester.

Artevelde chose the best way out of the difficulty.

In the previous question the information given by contemporaries is unanimous; it is only with their modern opponents that we have to deal. But as to Artevelde's death, contemporary evidence is conflicting and bewildering. Modern writers have made the confusion worse by their denial of the Prince of Wales project. But most of the chroniclers agree in connecting Artevelde's death

Causes of Artevelde's murder.

Connection with the Prince of Wales project.

¹ Rymer, *s.a.* 1436.

with an attempt to substitute the young Edward for Count Louis. Some add that he had got from the English king a force of Welsh, intending thereby to subdue the town to his wicked will. From this we may at least gather that the charge of betraying the country into the hands of the English was found valuable as a cry against him.

According to the ordinary account, Artevelde was attacked in his house by a mob which overpowered all resistance, and killed the Captain after a brave defence. Of whom was this mob composed? According to most historians, of weavers; according to Jehan le Bel,¹ of fullers. But it is obviously improbable that the weavers should have attacked the man whom they had themselves raised to power, to whom they probably owed their constitutional victory, and who had, a few months before, defended them in a bitter struggle against the fullers. It is far more likely that the fullers and smaller trades, whose jealousy had been utilised by the governing class in the years 1326-1337 for the

Improbable that the tumult was caused by the weavers, probably by the fullers and small crafts.

¹ II. 37. Lettenhove, *Hist.* iii. 295, says: "foulons et petits metiers," but has since, in his notes to *Froissart*, constructed a theory of the enmity of the weavers based on a mistaken view of the constitutional changes under Artevelde.

repression of the weavers, should, out of anger that their enemies had gained at least as important a place as themselves in the government of the town, and had defeated them by Artevelde's aid in the battle of Quaden Maendag, have been ready to attack the chief of their enemies. It seems clear that the actual leader of the attacking mob was a certain Thomas Denys, according to one version of Froissart a tiler, according to a chronicle of Ypres a saddle-maker;¹ in either case it was a member of one of the small crafts, and not Gerhard Denys Dean of the Weavers. The latter, indeed, became "beleeder van der stede" after Artevelde's death, and appears to have followed his policy of alliance with England. In 1371 we find two persons paying fines on account of the murder: of these the one, Jean Panneberch, belonged to a family which owned an estate at Basseroode, and as the property of Artevelde's neighbours seems to have been in some way injured by his dikes, Panneberch's hostility may have been simply personal; the other, Walter de Mey, was a "bourgeois héritable" belonging to a family which had furnished a member to the échevinal body in

The leader
 Thomas,
 not
 Gerhard,
 Denys.

Jean
 Panne-
 berch and
 Walter de
 Mey im-
 plicated.

¹ Lett. J. d'A. 107, n 3.

1318.¹ Connecting these facts with the accusations of Steenbeke, and the statement in the *Chronique de Flandre* that the commons in the council would have consented to Artevelde's proposal concerning Prince Edward, but "les notables Bourgeois" rejected it, a tentative explanation may be suggested which accounts for most of the circumstances, and seems consistent with the previous history of the town.

Suggested
explanation.

Magnates
had acquiesced
in Artevelde's
rule to secure
themselves
against the
Count and
the King
of France.

It has been seen that so long as the Counts were struggling to maintain their independence against France, the ruling class in the great towns were uniformly on the side of the French king. But when, after the battle of Cassel, the Count had become the obedient tool of France, and the king began to assist him in attacking their privileges, the "majores" were forced to ally themselves with the artisans, with whom, up to that time, they had been engaged in a bitter contest. They had therefore acquiesced in the elevation and the measures of Artevelde. But these measures were such as to weaken their power and to concede in principle, if not in fact, the whole contention of the artisans. As soon, therefore, as Artevelde had freed the country

¹ L'Espinoy; cf. Moke. *Rev. Nat.* iv. 360-1.

from the yoke of France, his power was threatened. The accusations of Steenbeke and the uproar of Quaden Maendag were but symptoms. Probably most of the great families, *e.g.* the Vaernewycks, were ready to support the present *régime* in which they had still considerable power, but it is possible that even they had become lukewarm in their attachment to Artevelde since the Prince of Wales scheme had been put forward. A large body of the burgher aristocracy, however, had not learnt wisdom from recent events; they were eager to overthrow one who had attacked their monopoly of office, and who, as a member of their own class, was in their eyes only the more guilty. It was not difficult to induce the fullers and small crafts to rise,—men who preferred the semblance of power, if their rivals were excluded, to its reality if shared with them. A convenient cry for all was that Artevelde was betraying county and city to the English. They succeeded. With Artevelde fell the English alliance, and the return of the Count became inevitable.

This no longer necessary, and Artevelde had endangered their power by constitutional reforms.

Aid of Fullers and Small Crafts gained, and a cry of treachery raised.

IV.

ROOSEBEKE.

Condition
of Ghent
apparently
un-
changed.

1346.
Accession
of Louis
de Male.

AT first it seemed that the death of Artevelde had produced no change in the condition of Ghent itself, or in the relation of the county to its lord. Edward professed himself satisfied with the excuses made by the deputies of Ghent for the murder, and the towns renewed their oath of alliance. In the following year Count Louis was killed at Crecy, earning for himself thereby that epithet which so fitly marks his lifelong devotion to the King of France. His son, Louis de Male, so called from the castle near Bruges where he was born, was now only sixteen years old. French in manners and ideas, he showed even more than his father that cruelty to all beneath knightly rank and that caste insolence which characterised fourteenth century chivalry.

During the whole of the war "the good towns" had carefully abstained from touching the rights of their lord. The same attitude was still preserved. Edward, making a hurried visit from his camp before Calais, was warmly welcomed at Ghent and Ypres; the deputies of the towns of Flanders, Brabant, and Hainault swore to maintain their confederation. On the other hand, the towns gave Louis de Male upon his accession a kindly welcome; it was a favourable opportunity to repair the evil work of his father, and win back the affection of his people. Their dearest wish was that he should marry one of Edward's daughters; negotiations with that object were set on foot. But the youthful Count, who was entirely under the influence of the Leliaerts, had already arranged a marriage with Margaret, daughter of the Duke of Brabant, his father's ally. The Gantois, therefore, thought it expedient to employ a little gentle coercion, and, in concert with Edward, appointed the Margrave of Juliers, the son-in-law of the English king, to watch over him as governor, lest he should escape to France. In March, 1347, Louis feigned to yield, and meeting Edward, Queen Philippa, and the Princess Isabella, his intended bride, at

The
Gantois
attempt to
coerce him
into
marrying
a daughter
of
Edward.

1347.
He
escapes
and
marries
Margaret
of Brabant.

Bergues, consented to the marriage. But a few days later he escaped from his "courteous prison," as Froissart calls it, and took refuge in France. In May Flanders was put under interdict, in July Count Louis wedded Margaret of Brabant. Now began to be felt the effects of Artevelde's death. No longer could Edward rely upon the firm support of the Flemish towns, now that the only man capable of governing the county firmly had been removed. After the truce of 1347 with France, his interest in the maintenance of Flemish freedom manifestly declined, and in December, 1348, he assented to a treaty by which the obedience of the towns was restored to their Count.

1348.
Dec.
Edward
abandons
the
Flemings.

Aristo-
cratic
reaction in
Ghent :
échevins
no longer
elected by
whole
town.

In Ghent, though the old colleagues of James van Artevelde were still at the head of affairs, the oligarchic reaction had already set in ; a mark of this was that the election of échevins, which in the time of Artevelde was apparently the work of the whole town, was restored to the four commissioners of the prince and four delegates of the citizens.¹ The wealthy burghers, and probably their allies, the fullers and lesser crafts, were ready to acquiesce in the treaty

¹ Vanderk. *Sittie*, 205, n 6.

of 1348, but the weavers gave loud expression to their dissatisfaction. A thousand men-at-arms were hastily sent by the Count to the aid of the "good folk," and the contemporary chronicler gives a striking account of the opposing forces drawn up in battle array, the Leliaerts crying "The Lion of Flanders!" the weavers "The Commune and our Friends!"¹

1349.
Jan. 13.
Rising of
the
weavers,
caused by
the treaty
of
December,
sup-
pressed.

The weavers were overpowered; Jan van de Velde the present, and Gerhard Denys, the recent dean, were killed in the affray. Immediately afterwards the first échevin of the Keure, Lievin van Veurne, and his colleagues were removed from office. As has been well said, the influence of the weavers during Artevelde's administration must indeed have been great for the échevinage to be thus identified with them.²

Removal
of
échevins.

Not only was there a change in the *personnel* of the administration; all the constitutional reforms of the last ten years were abolished, and the old system was restored in its entirety. Again there appears a Dean of the Burghers, "dekan van den poortere;"

¹ Li Muisis, *Corp.* ii. 287: "*Gemeente ende vrient quod est dictum Communia et Amici.*"

² In the *Comptes* of 1348-9 quoted by Vand. *Siècle*, 169, *n* 1, the deposition of Lievin van Veurne is mentioned as the result of the battle "van der weverie up de goede lieden van der stede."

Complete
restoration
of the old
system in
Ghent,

again the Fullers and Lesser Guilds are conciliated by a nominal share of power ; again the Weavers are deprived of their Dean, and the tax on apprentices is reimposed.¹ The ruling class had at last regained their position, and the work of the last ten years was cancelled. At Bruges and Ypres similar events had been taking place, resulting there, as elsewhere, in the restoration of oligarchic government. At Ypres, as at Ghent, a battle had been fought in the streets ; the seven leaders of the craftsmen were solemnly executed in the market-place.² As late as 1351 164 persons were banished for life from Bruges, 125 from the Franc.³ For ten years the country quietly settled down under the rule of the Count and the "lignages."

Ypres,

and
Bruges.

Impulse
given by
the
Parisian
move-
ment.

The democratic movement in France under Marcel roused the artisans from their lethargy. In Paris as in Ghent the richer citizens were ready for peace at almost any price ; it was upon the guilds that the great Prévôt des Marchands had to rely ; it was by

¹ Vand. *Siècle*, 169, n 2.

² Li Muisis, *Corp.* ii. 286 : the insurgents were a "multitudo texentium et fullonum."

³ Gilliodts, *Inv. Br.* ii. Nos. 497-8 : among the banished Brugeois were four "Li Roys," i.e. members of the Coninck family.

the "bourgeois" that he was betrayed. The analogy between the struggle of the French artisans under Marcel and that of their Flemish fellows under James van Artevelde is not imaginary; it was seen by contemporary observers, and the comparison is made even by Jehan le Bel.

On July 1, 1358, "The provost of merchants, the échevins and the masters of the guilds of the good town of Paris," addressed a letter to the towns of Picardy and Flanders. After describing the measures of the States-General following the battle of Poitiers, it continues, "Dear lords and friends, we write to you because we know certainly that you love, and always have loved, the good town of Paris, and the merchants as well of that as of the other good towns, the commons, and the labourers; and for three reasons; first, in order that you may see the justice of our cause; secondly, that we may have your counsel and aid, for the position of affairs is as perilous for you as for us, since your land is likely to be wasted as ours has been; thirdly, to beg you to take possession of the property of such Flemish lords as are fighting against us, and to provide concerning them in such a way as shall be for our honour and

1358, July.
Letter of
Marcel
to the
Flemish
towns.

1359,
May,
June.
Risings in
Bruges
and Ypres.

In Ghent
Weavers
allied with
Small
Crafts
regain
power.

safety for we would do the like for you in a similar case.”¹ On the last day of the same month Marcel fell. His appeal, and the example of the French towns, produced no immediately visible results. But in May and June of the following year the men of Bruges began to move, and the artisans assumed the red hood which, from its use at Paris, had become the symbol of revolt.² The rising soon became general. At Ypres the weavers, unable to secure the restoration of “the ordinances of the time of Artevelde,” took possession of the government, executed some of the échevins, and imprisoned others. Meanwhile the weavers of Ghent had raised their banners, and, aided by the small guilds, had regained power.³ During the last ten years the predominance of the fullers, leagued as they were with the “lignages,” and choosing their officers from the great families, had probably become even more distasteful to the small crafts than the previous supremacy of the weavers ; for most of the lesser guilds, from the nature of their occupations, still consisted entirely

¹ Text in notes to Lett. *Froiss.* iv. 469.

² Gill. *Invent. Brug.* ii. 99. “Item van lij rode caproenen te makene” *Comptes.*

³ Vand. *Siècle*, 171-2.

of manual labourers. An inquiry was set on foot into the administration of the last decade, or, as it is expressed in the town account-books, into "the book of the échevinage of Heinrix Gruts which was in the year 1348, and of the following échevinages up to the year 1358." Some attempt was at the same time made to bring about concerted action on the part of the popular party in all the towns; parliaments of deputies came together every few weeks. The true character of the movement is shown by a single illustration: out of twenty-six deputies sent on one occasion from Bruges to Ghent, twenty-one were deans of guilds.¹ Negotiations were even opened with England, but proved resultless. Edward had long before determined that it was useless to ally himself with, or even to take the trouble to conciliate the Flemings; in 1353 he had transferred the staple from Bruges to Westminster, and now, at the moment when the popular rising in Flanders seemed to have the best chance of success, he agreed to the Treaty of Bretigny. Up to this time the fiction had been carefully maintained that Edward, as King of France, was overlord of Flanders.

No help
from
Edward,

¹ Gill. *Inv. Br.* ii. 101.

who at
Bretigny
1360
renounces
title, 'King
of France,'
and
abandons
the
Flemish
alliance.

Restora-
tion of the
old con-
stitution in
Ypres and
Bruges.

But now he gave up that title, and with it his fictitious relation to the county. "The King of France and his eldest son will abandon all the alliances which they have made with the Scots. And similarly the King of England and his eldest son will depart from all the alliances which they have made with the Flemings, and will promise that neither they nor their heirs will give them aid or comfort against the King of France, and that they will make no future alliances with Flanders against the King and kingdom of France." As the popular party were thus deprived of all hope of foreign support, and no statesman arose to unite their disconnected efforts, Louis de Male had little difficulty in restoring the old state of things in most of the towns. In Ypres, where the rising had been most violent, the reaction was proportionately violent; some chroniclers declare that not less than fifteen hundred weavers were there put to death. The Brugeois also were forced to place their liberties unreservedly in the Count's hands; it was provided that "if any one cause any outcry, assembly, trouble, or anything else which may excite to take up arms or occasion tumult in the town, he shall be decapitated before

the Town Hall. If he be a member of a guild the guild shall surrender him on pain of being deprived of its franchises."¹ In Ghent, however, owing, it may be conjectured, to the alliance of the small crafts with the weavers, they were able to hold their own. From the first day they had gained the government of the town they had deprived the Dean of the Fullers of his dignity. From this time he sinks to the position of a mere dean of guild, and no longer has the emoluments and authority of a town officer. It is scarcely necessary to remark that no more is heard of the apprentice-tax. Henceforth the Weavers are the chief Member of the town. What became of the "rentiers," the families "belonging to no trade," it is impossible to determine with certainty. Probably they had to become members of the weavers' guild; certainly they no longer had a Dean of their own, *i.e.* no longer formed a distinct body with guild organisation.

But at Ghent the craftsmen maintain their position.

The Fullers' Dean deprived of his dignity,

and the Dean of the Poorterie disappears.

Meanwhile the connection with France was becoming closer. The attempt to add Flanders to the domain of the French crown had been abandoned since the expediency of retaining the Count's friend-

Connection between Flanders and France becoming closer.

¹ Vanderk. *Sixle, u.s.*

ship had been shown by the English war. But if Flanders was not to be so incorporated, it was to have a prince of the French royal house set over it. Count Louis was without male heir. His only daughter, Margaret, had in 1355 been married to Philippe de Rouvre of Burgundy, on which occasion John of France, who had married the duchess-dowager, had not only renounced the right of putting Flanders under interdict, but had obtained from Innocent VI. a bull revoking the powers conferred on previous kings of France. When, shortly after, the young Duke of Burgundy died, Edward III. had commenced negotiations for the marriage of the widowed Margaret to one of his sons. In 1363 Louis de Male went so far as to promise her to the Earl of Cambridge, without in the least intending to carry out the engagement; Urban V. readily yielded to the representations of Charles of France and refused the necessary dispensation. In 1369 the princess married Charles' brother, Philippe le Hardi, the new Duke of Burgundy. It has been observed that nothing better shows the change in public opinion than the fact that, though the marriage was of the utmost importance to Flanders, the towns raised no remonstrance against

1369.
Count
Louis'
heirress
Margaret
marries
Philippe
le Hardi.

it.¹ It is to be remembered, however, that the artisans, who had been the most sturdy opponents of French influence, had been thrust back into subjection in all the towns save Ghent. The restitution so long demanded of Lille, Douai and Bethune, which accompanied the marriage, might seem even to the popular party a benefit in some degree compensating for the evil. But Charles V. in restoring the conquests of Philip the Fair was prompted not so much by fraternal affection as by motives of policy; by the incorporation of a Walloon population Flanders would insensibly become less Teutonic, and more open to French influences.

Restoration of
Lille,
Douai and
Bethune.

Froissart fitly opens his account of the later troubles in Flanders by a description of Ghent. "You know, if you have been in Flanders, that the town of Ghent is the sovereign town of Flanders for power, counsel, lordship, situation, and all that one can imagine as belonging to a good and noble town; and that three great rivers serve it, bearing ships to go throughout the world. The largest is the river Scheldt, and then the river Lys, and then the Lievre, for it brings ships to

Froissart's
description
of Ghent.

¹ Wenzelburger, *Gesch. d. Nied.* 260.

1379.
Renewal
of Civil
War.

The
Gantois
refuse to
pay the
expenses
of a
tourney.

The
Bruges
magnates
make a
grant in
return for
permission
to
construct a
canal to
the Lys.

them and great profit, inasmuch as it connects them with Sluys and Damme, whence many articles that come by sea get to them. Down the Scheldt come the corn of Hainault and the wine of France, down the Lys plenty of corn from Artois and the surrounding districts."¹ Such was the town wherein on Whit Monday 1379 the Count determined to hold a great tourney, to which were invited all the nobles of the surrounding countries. For the pleasures of the Count the citizens were expected to pay: a crier announced from the Town Hall that a new tax was to be levied. The Gantois refused to pay, and the Count in anger went off to Bruges to make the same request, promising to grant in return whatever the citizens might desire. Their pet project was the construction of a canal connecting the Lys above Ghent with Bruges, and thence with the sea. Louis readily consented to an undertaking which could cost him nothing, and would punish Ghent, whereupon the Brugeois granted a considerable subsidy. Froissart² and most modern writers following him attribute the conduct of Bruges to mere town rivalry; but it must be remembered that in Bruges the government of

¹ Ed. Lett. ix. 159.

² *Ib.* 162 seq.

the oligarchy had been restored, while in Ghent the artisans had retained the political power which they had won in 1359. With the desire of aggrandising their town was united a wish to repress their democratic neighbour, whose example was dangerous to themselves.

By the threat of so deadly an attack upon their commercial prosperity, Ghent was startled ; the staple of corn from Artois would almost certainly be removed to Bruges, and Ghent would sink to the second place among the towns of Flanders. More particularly did this affect the "navyeurs," that is to say, apparently, the boatmen of the Lys and Scheldt ; they could not without a struggle allow the Brugeois "to take away the current and so ruin their trade." A leader was not far to seek. There had long ago, Froissart tells us, been a feud between the two families of Piet and Baert at Damme. Allied with the former was the family of Yoens, with the latter the family of Mahieu. The rivalry continued long after the two latter families had settled in Ghent. Gilbert Mahieu had recently suggested to the Count that his income might be considerably increased by the imposition of a tax upon the ships navigating the Scheldt

Danger to
the trade
of Ghent,

specially
felt by the
"navy-
eurs."

Previous
history of
Jean
Yoens,

and Lys. The guild of "navyeurs," of which Jean Yoens was the dean, had refused to pay, whereupon the Count had displaced Yoens and had appointed in his stead the suggestor of the impost. It is possible indeed that the family of Yoens had a traditional connection with the popular party ; for one of its members had commanded a division under James van Artevelde in the expedition to Biervliet.¹ Jean's loss of office for maintaining the rights of his guild did not diminish his popularity. So when the news came of the Bruges' project the "navyeurs" cried out, "If only Yoens were our dean, matters would not go thus." To him then every one turned : he was chosen Captain of the town, and put in command of a force of "White Hoods."

chosen
Captain
of Ghent.

The canal-
works
stopped.

Meanwhile the Brugeois had already commenced work : there were soon some six hundred workmen employed near Aeltre in cutting a canal between the Lys and the Reye.² For nineteen weeks,—from March 19th to July 23rd,—the long-suffering Gantois allowed the works to continue, but at last their patience was exhausted ; a small force was despatched, and the labourers put to flight.

¹ Willem Yoens, probably the same person, appears in 1339 as Dean of the Lesser Guilds, among which that of the "navyeurs" was of course included. *v. supra* 146.

² Gilliodts, *Inv.* ii. 368.

The partisans of the Count had not even yet learned prudence. A few days later a man in Ghent, who had made himself noticeable by his white hood and cry of "Poortereye," was seized by the Bailli's serjeants and imprisoned. The Bailli, Roger of Hauterive, refused to liberate him, and threatened all who wore the white hood with like punishment; whereupon the Dean of the Weavers ordered the craftsmen to suspend work, and the échevins went off to Male to plead with the Count. He replied that he would forbid the continuance of the canal works if the Gantois would give up their white hoods; but this they refused to do, and the weavers remained under arms. With knightly contempt for a town population the Leliaerts around the Count thought it would be easy to capture the town by a *coup de main*. Two hundred horsemen under Roger of Hauterive were to enter the town suddenly, the friends of Mahieu were to meet them at the corn-market, and, to use a modern phrase, order was to be restored. But the intruders were overpowered, the Bailli slain, and the Count's banner torn in pieces. The anger of the people was now thoroughly roused. Three days later they went out

Imprudent
action of
the Bailli.

Sept. 5.
Leliaerts
unsuccess-
ful in an
attempt to
surprise
the town.

Gantois in
revenge
destroy the
castle of
Wondel-
ghem.

The
Brugeois
join in the
revolt.

and burnt Louis's favourite castle of Wondelghem, which he had built only ten years before ; on their return they broke down the bridges connecting the Postern-house, where the Count usually resided when at Ghent, with the ramparts. Reconciliation was henceforth hopeless ; the Count demanded absolute submission, and the Gantois set about winning to their side the other towns. Yoens was at once welcomed at Termonde and Alost ; when he appeared at Bruges with some eight or nine thousand men, the magistrates, after a little parley, opened the gates, and declared their adhesion to the popular cause. Some explanation is obviously needed of so extraordinary a change of attitude. We may readily conjecture that, although the ruling class could hold their ground when undisturbed from without, the appearance of so large a force of craftsmen before their gates would have caused the artisans within to rise, and that therefore the échevins judged it best to make a virtue of necessity.¹ From

¹ Lettenhove, *Hist.* iii. 434, placidly continues his narrative without pausing to wonder or explain. Froissart, ed. Lett. ix. 192, lays stress on the fright caused by the Gantois : "Chil de Bruges qui s'assam- bloient ou marchiet pour eulx consillier (*i.e.* the town council?) furent tout affracé."

Bruges Yoens went on to Damme, where he was joyfully admitted; but during his stay he became ill,—not without strong suspicion of poison,—and died as he was being carried to Ghent on a litter.

“At the death of Jean Yoens,” says Froissart, “every enemy rejoiced and every friend mourned. His body was carried to Ghent, and all the army returned. When the news of his death came to the town, all were greatly grieved, for he was much loved there except by those who were of the Count’s party. The clergy came out to meet the body, and it was carried into the town with as great solemnity as if he had been a Count of Flanders, and he was buried very reverently in the church of S. Nicolas; there his obsequies were celebrated and there he lies.”¹

Death of
Yoens.

Before the death of Yoens the Gantois had already gained Courtray and Ypres. In the latter town “the great burghers,” says the *Chronique de Flandre*,² “had despatched a message to the Count that if he would send some knights to their assistance they could hold the town against the men of Ghent, and they would have on their side part of the commons of Ghent.” The narrative of Froissart,³

Sept. 17.
[Victory
of the
artisans in
Ypres.

¹ Lettenhove, *Hist.* iii. 194.

² Ed. Sauvage, 223.

³ *u.s.* 197.

imaginary as the details may be, sets the divisions within the town very clearly before us, and shows that the old class struggle was still going on. "When the commons of Ypres and the men of the small guilds heard of the coming of the men of Ghent, they armed themselves and put themselves in array in the market-place. The rich and notable men were powerless. . . . The knights were drawn up behind the gate, and were ready to make a good defence . . . but the guilds, whether the great ones liked it or no, came down to the gates and cried, 'Open to our good friends and neighbours of Ghent, we wish them to enter our town.' The knights replied that they were sent to Ypres by the Count for its protection. Words multiplied between the *gentilshommes* and the *doyens des menus mestiers*, till, crying "'Sdeath! you shall not be lords of our town,' they assailed them . . . ; with difficulty could any rich man escape. The gate was opened, and the Gantois entered and were lords and masters of the town." Soon all the country save Audenarde and the county of Alost had decided for the popular cause.

The rising
becomes
general.

In Yoens' stead four captains had been chosen in

Ghent,—Pierre van den Bossche, Jean Pruneel, Jean Bolle, and Rasse d'Herzeele. Audenarde was the only important place now left to the Count; a force of eight hundred lances had been thrown into the town, and everything depended on its fate. All the Flemish communes sent contingents to join the men of Ghent in the siege. But, when two months had passed and Audenarde not taken, the besiegers were obliged to accept the mediation of the Duke of Burgundy, who was naturally interested in restoring the authority of his father-in-law. Terms were soon arranged: the Count was to pardon all that had been done; the communes were to keep their privileges "in such a way that the Count should be a free lord and his people a free people."¹ The towns promised that all whom they had driven out as Leliaerts should be allowed a legal inquiry, while the Count on his side engaged that all the baillis, his judicial representatives within the towns, should be deprived of office, unless they chose to demand a trial, and could prove that they had not conspired against the communes. Finally, a

Four
captains
in Ghent.

Oct.-Nov.
Unsuccess-
ful siege of
Aude-
narde.

Dec.
Peace.

¹ "Dat wij zyn een vri heer ende onze liede vrie liede." Quoted Lett. ii. 440.

commission consisting of the Count's Bailli¹ and two delegates of the towns was to examine into the administration and hear all alleged grievances; and the inquiry was to be repeated every five years.

There seemed to be some chance of the restoration of peace; the treaty was confirmed at Mechlin by the Count on December 4, the troops of Ghent left Audenarde on the same day; and throughout Flanders new magistrates were appointed in accordance with the recent treaty, Jean Pruneel and Jean Bolle being two of the four electors chosen, in accordance with the Charter of 1301, by the people of Ghent.

The Count, unable to obtain French aid, resorts to guerilla warfare.

Passing through Bruges the Count came with manifest ill-grace to visit Ghent as he had promised; upon the renewed refusal of the citizens to abandon their white hoods and surrender the leaders of the late insurrection, he hurriedly left the town, and, like his father before him in somewhat similar circumstances, went off to Paris for help. But Charles V. was too wise to waste the national strength by unnecessary generosity; Louis there-

¹ Concerning the *Sovereign Bailli*, v. *infra*. 219.

fore had to content himself with carrying on a petty guerilla warfare. Scarcely a pretence was made of observing the recent treaty. A band of knights headed by Olivier of Hauterive, a relative doubtless of the late Bailli of Ghent, seized forty boats on the Lys, put out the eyes and cut off the hands of the boatmen, and in that plight sent them back to Ghent. In reprisal Jean Pruneel, with a body of five hundred White Hoods, surprised Audenarde. Yet, though they had sufficient justification for taking a violent revenge, the Gantois were soon recalled to moderate action. Nothing indeed strikes us in reading the history of the Flemish towns so much as a certain law-abiding spirit, and a readiness to make peace on anything like reasonable terms. By the mediation of Simon Bette, Gilbert de Gruutere and Jean van der Zickele, heads of three of the most important patrician houses in Ghent¹ and of strong Leliaert sympathies, they were induced to evacuate Audenarde, and peace was again restored by the banishment alike of Pruneel and of Olivier of

1380,
March.
In spite of
the
greatest
provoca-
tion, the
magnates
of Ghent
succeed in
restoring
peace.

¹ Gruutere was échevin in 1376, 1379; Bette 1381; Zickele 1377, 1380. Vanderk. *Sikle*, 172.

Hauterive. There could be no clearer proof of the influence still retained by the great burghers than the fact that, even while popular excitement was greatest, they kept the most important places in the administration, and caused terms like these to be accepted. But the Count was by no means disposed to act with like moderation. Pruneel, who had retired to Ath in Hainault, but had been given up to Louis by Count Albert, was executed at Lille; and as spring had now returned, and the Count had got together a small force, he determined to make an incursion into the county. In April he crossed the Lys, murdering all the labourers in the fields, surprised Ypres, and, putting hundreds of artisans to the sword, took his revenge for their welcome of the Gantois in the previous year. After this exploit, which gained for himself no advantage and only intensified the hatred of his subjects, the Count retired to Lille to await reinforcements.

April.
Again
broken
by the
Count.

Victory
of the
Clauwa-
erts in
Ypres by
the aid of
the lesser
guilds,

The conduct of the prince, far from disheartening, had but given new vigour to the popular party. Ghent raised an army which destroyed the castles of Leliaert nobles in the neighbourhood of the town. At Ypres there was a battle in the streets

between the Leliaerts and the Clauwaerts; the Clauwaerts, most of whom were weavers or fullers, were victorious owing to the defection from their opponents of the Dean of the lesser crafts.¹ In Bruges occurred a similar struggle between the *great* and the *small*,—in another MS. of Froissart the *people*; but here the magnates got the upper hand,² and a messenger was sent to Lille begging the Count to hasten to the town. Before he could arrive an attempt had been made by a troop of White Hoods from Ghent to raise the populace. They were repulsed after a hard fight: in a few days the Count announced by letters patent that his authority was entirely restored in the town. Meanwhile, however, the Yprois had driven the Leliaerts from Poperinghe; the Gantois had taken Termonde; and now the two great towns were raising a large army to besiege Bruges. By the advice of the magistrates, who feared as before that a popular rising might force them to surrender the town, the Count consented to an armistice.

but the magnates gain the upper hand in a struggle at Bruges.

June 19.
Armistice.

¹ Letten. *Hist.* iii. 450.

² *Froiss.* ed. Lett. iv. 341. "Uns contens et uns mautallens entre les gros et les menus (al. le peuple) de Bruges, car li menut mestier voloient faire à leur entente, et li gros ne le peurent souffrir."

Count
Louis
obtains
troops
from the
Franc,

Louis spent the interval of peace in visiting the Franc, which since the suppression of the rising of Zannequin had been completely under seigneurial influence ; here he had no difficulty in raising a large body of troops.¹ With these, together with a number of knights from Hainault and Artois and the militia of Bruges, he proceeded to Dixmude. The White Hoods of Ghent had meanwhile occupied Deinse, and some three or four thousand men now marched out to meet the Count. But on the way to Dixmude they fell into an ambush at Woumen, and most of them were put to the sword.

and
Aug. 23,
defeats
the
Gantois at
Woumen.

The
victory
reduces all
Flanders,
save
Ghent, to
sub-
mission.

The results of the disaster were startling : all Flanders, save Ghent, was at the feet of the Count. In Ypres "the rich and notable men of the town determined to open their gates and beg for mercy ; for it was well known that they had been forced to go on the side of Ghent by the commons, fullers and weavers, and such sorry folk." ² Froissart assures us that seven hundred "fullers and weavers and such manner of people, who had

¹ *Froiss.* ed. Lett. ix. 342. "Chil dou Franc ont este toudis plus de la partie dou conte que tous li demorans de Flandres." ² *Ib.* 346-7.

caused Yoens and the Gantois to enter the town" were put to death. Courtray opened its gates, and soon every town except Ghent had submitted to the Count.

A great army was speedily brought together and the siege of Ghent began. But the great extent of the city rendered a complete blockade impracticable, even with the large force under the Count's command. "It was impossible to prevent the Gantois having three or four gates open, by the which provisions came to them without danger; the Brabançons, especially the men of Brussels, were very favourable to them. The Count held the approaches to the town from the direction of Bruges and Courtray; on the Brussels and Quatre-Métiers side he could not blockade them on account of the Lys and the Scheldt."¹ More than two hundred thousand men, it is Froissart's opinion, would have been necessary for the operation. It soon became obvious that the city was not easily to be taken; not satisfied with repulsing the besiegers, expeditions issued from the unguarded gates, and Alost, Termonde, and Grammont were captured.

Sept.
Siege of
Ghent.

¹ *Froiss.* ed. Lett. ix. 350.

Nov. 11.
Impossible
to take the
city, so
again a
truce
made.

In November the Count found it expedient to make a truce: the offences of the Gantois and their allies were graciously pardoned, their franchises were restored; but, as before, fidelity to treaty obligations was to be found only on one side.

1381.
March.
Renewal
of war.

In February of the following year the Count caused all the goods of Gantois to be seized in the markets. This was a declaration of war. In the next month Ghent and Ypres renewed their alliance and the war recommenced in the same miserable manner as in former years. One year is like another, with its monotonous iteration of ambushes and forays. In May a large body of Gantois was surprised by the Count at Nevele; they boldly stood their ground and met the enemy with the cry "Ghent! Ghent!" but were overpowered and slain. Yet Ghent was undaunted by defeat, and sent off several expeditions to secure the neighbouring towns.

May.
Defeat of
the
Gantois at
Nevele.

Negotiations were reopened through the mediation of the Count of Hainault; Simon Bette and Gilbert de Gruutere, who were among the representatives of Ghent, and whose influence had before been so valuable to Count Louis, might perhaps once more

have induced the town to submit to unfavourable terms. But their plans were spoilt by the rashness of one of their own party. Gilles de Meulenaere was at this time First Captain of the town. A certain Simon de Vaernewyck,¹ who seems to have sympathised with Bette in his attempts to bring about a reconciliation with the Count by the sacrifice of the common folk, meeting Meulenaere one day, reproached him with preventing peace; a quarrel arose, and in the scuffle Meulenaere was killed. Vaernewyck was treated leniently and allowed to go into exile, but the plans of the Leliaert magnates were ruined.²

Quarrel in Ghent between Vaernewyck and Meulenaere: death of the latter.

Pierre van den Bossche, throughout the most able and vigorous leader of the popular party, saw clearly that the disaffection of the wealthier citizens was becoming dangerous.³ Looking round for a successor to Meulenaere, the idea suggested itself of conferring the office of captain upon the son of

Increasing disaffection of the wealthier citizens.

¹ The great family of Vaernewyck, which had furnished so many magistrates to the city in the time of the elder Artevelde, would appear to have been at this time under a cloud, as none of its members are mentioned in the lists of L'Espinoy.

² *Froiss.* ed. Lett. ix. Notes, 560.

³ "Quant Pierre . . . vei que li riche homme se commenchoient à taner et à lasser et à esbahir de la guerre." *Ib.* 373.

Pierre van den Bossche invites Philip van Artevelde to accept the captaincy. James van Artevelde; even if he showed little ability his name would rekindle popular enthusiasm. Of Philip's previous history scarcely anything is known: we are told merely that he lived comfortably upon his "rentes," in a very retired manner, for he was "a man of whom no one took any notice in the town of Ghent; a young man wise enough, but his wisdom was not known, for he had never had anything up to that time to do." We may omit the long arguments by which Pierre persuaded Philip to accept the offer, and the speeches ascribed by Froissart both to Artevelde and van den Bossche, which were doubtless invented as suitable for the occasion.

1382.
Jan. 24.
Philip
elected to
the same
office as
his father
had held.

On the twenty-fourth of January Philip was elected chief-captain; at the same time four other captains were appointed or confirmed, Pierre van den Bossche, Rasse van de Voorde, Jacques Derycke, and Jean de Heyst. As the number is the same as in 1338, and as Philip seems to have had much the same position with regard to his colleagues as his father before him, it is probable, though nowhere stated, that they were captains of parishes, and that Philip like James had "'t beleet van de stede."

A few days later Simon Bette, first échevin of the Keure, and Gilbert de Gruutere his companion, were put to death upon their return from a conference at Harlebeke. According to the picturesque story of Froissart, van den Bossche and Artevelde had planned the denunciation and execution of the returning magistrates, because they brought with them terms of peace by which, as the former declared, the rich would escape and the poor suffer.¹ When therefore at the assembly of the people Bette and his companions announced that the Count would grant peace upon the surrender of two hundred men, van den Bossche and Artevelde slew the traitors on the spot. According to the *Memorieboek* of Ghent, however,² it was in a popular *émeute* that Bette was killed, and it was not till four days afterwards that Gruutere was executed together with Jean Sleepstaf and Jean Mahieu,—the name of the latter sufficiently accounting for his fate. According to some authorities Bette and Gruutere were accused of the murder of Meulenaere; according to others they had planned the betrayal of the town to the Count.

Execution
of Bette
and
Gruutere
for
treason-
able
intrigues.

¹ *Froiss.* ed. Lett. ix. 442: "li riche homme" (some MS. add "*de grand linage*") "en yront quite."

² *Ib.* Notes, 566.

The statements are really consistent ; for some time a part at least of the ruling class had been scheming to bring about peace at any price ;¹ they had been discovered and punished, and the popular party had gained a leader under whom they were to have a brief season of success.

Reported
ordinance
for the
mainte-
nance of
peace,

The beginning of Philip van Artevelde's rule was, according to Meyer, marked, like that of his father, by the issue of an ordinance for the restoration of order within the town. All private feuds were to be suspended till forty days after the conclusion of peace with the Count ; homicide was to be punished with death ; and all who fought in the streets were to be imprisoned. Every month an account of public expenditure was to be presented to the common council, at which every person, rich or poor, should be entitled to be present ;² and

¹ The family of Bette was, as mentioned before, one of the four in which according to tradition the office of *échevin* was hereditary before 1176. From the lists in L'Espinoy we find that Simon Bette was *échevin* in 1372 and 1379, his brother Guillaume in 1374, Gruutere in 1373, 1376 and 1379, Sleepdaf, 1369, 1371, 1379, and Mahieu, 1379.

² Meyer, *s.a.* "Ad commune concilium tam pauper quam dives accedito sententiamque dicito. Ratio bonorum Reipublicae singulis mensibus habetor. In his omnibus summum sibi populi consensum Artevelde habuit."

every one was to wear a gauntlet with the words "Helpt God" thereon. Had such an ordinance been issued and carried out, although the constitution of the échevinage would have remained unaltered, the people would have gained a substantial control over the administration. No longer would the craftsmen be ignorant, and therefore suspicious of what their aristocratic representatives were doing. The absence of internal dissension after the battle of Roosebeke, at a time when their leader had fallen and the town was left alone to meet the assaults of the Count and of France, showed the unity of feeling which had by some means been secured.

and admission of all townsfolk to the assemblies.

The siege of Ghent had been discontinued; but the Count still held possession of Bruges and most of the other towns, and was endeavouring by cutting off supplies to force Ghent into submission. He had, for example, ordered the garrison of Termonde to lay waste the county of Alost, so that the people of that district might not send to Ghent as they had been wont, "beer, milk and cheese."¹ The supply of food was now reduced to what might be obtained from the Quatre Métiers. A small fleet

The Count's policy to cut off supplies from Ghent.

¹ *Froissart*, ed. Lett. x. 1, 2.

was therefore equipped for the purchase of provisions in the ports of Holland and Zeeland, while an expedition was sent under the captain Ackerman to visit the towns of Brabant for the same purpose. The men of Brussels and Louvain were liberal in their gifts: from Liège came six hundred cartloads of corn. But in a few weeks these provisions were exhausted, and the strict prohibition of Duke Albert prevented Holland and Zeeland from renewing their help.

The condition of things at the time when James van Artevelde began to influence public affairs, seemed to be repeated in the first weeks of his son's rule.

Famine.

The wool famine had touched the great mass of the inhabitants, the bread famine touched all. "The wise ones said this could not last long, or they would all die of hunger; for the granaries were empty, and people could not get bread for their money: soon the rich would have to guard their houses, or the lower classes who were dying of hunger would force them. It was very sad to see and hear the poor folk, and even men, women, and children of good condition, in this evil case. Every day came complaints and cries to Philip van Artevelde, at

that time sovereign captain, who had compassion on them and issued several good ordinances whereby he acquired great esteem; for he caused the granaries of the abbeys and of the rich men to be opened, and sold the corn at a fixed price. This comforted much the city of Ghent.”¹ But soon these stores would be exhausted and the town would be forced to yield. Artevelde therefore gladly accepted the proffered mediation of the Duchess of Brabant, the Bishop of Liège and Duke Albert, and consented to reopen negotiations at Tournay. Here assembled twelve citizens from each of the surrounding towns, a like number headed by Artevelde appearing from Ghent.

Negotiations at Tournay.

The picture Froissart gives is very touching: one cannot but think that as he grew older much of the superficial “chivalric” feeling wore off, and his really kindly nature showed itself. Any terms, said the Gantois, would be accepted if only their lives were spared. They would acquiesce in the banishment of any number the Count might choose from Ghent; “Philip was ready, if he had displeased the Count, although he had been but a very short time in the

Despair of the Gantois.

¹ *Froissart*, ed. I.ett. x. 3.

The
Count
demands
absolute
submis-
sion.

office of Captain of Ghent, to be one of those who should lose town and county for the great pity which he had for the common people of Ghent; for indeed when he started for Tournay, men, women, and children cast themselves on their knees before him, joining their hands, and beseeching him at whatever cost, to bring back peace."¹ But the Count refused to be present at the meeting; before he would listen to them, all the inhabitants were to come before him on the Bruges road, bareheaded, with halters round their necks, to implore his pardon.

April 30.
On the
advice of
Artevelde
the
Gantois
determine
on a final
effort.

With these ill tidings Artevelde returned to Ghent on April 29. On the following day he described to the assembled populace the condition of affairs. According to Froissart, whose account is too melodramatic to be entirely trusted, he laid before them three courses: to fire the town and perish in its ruins, to humiliate themselves before the Count, or to choose some five or six thousand of the stronger and better armed and attack the Count before Bruges with the energy of despair. "Ha! good Sir," they shouted in reply, "if that is your advice, we will do it."¹

¹ *Froissart*, ed. Lett. x. 26.

In two days' march the small force of Gantois reached the heath of Bevershoutsveld, all bearing the words "Helpt God," in white letters on a piece of black cloth attached to their sleeves. No reply was dignified to their renewed overtures. Early on the morning of the 3rd of May, mass was sung at seven different places in the camp by Franciscan friars,—members of an order which always sympathised in Flanders with the popular cause. Mass was followed by sermons; they were to remember how God had delivered the Israelites from the hand of Pharaoh, nor were they to be affrighted by the number of their assailants; God would have mercy upon those who fought for a good cause.

The battle which ensued it is difficult to explain; those writers who were favourable to the Gantois regarded it as a great victory; those who were unfavourable declared that, as it was the festival of the Holy Blood (S. Sang), the Brugeois were all drunk, and were knocked over "like chickens."¹ According to the most probable account, the battle began with an attack upon the Gantois by a tumultuous mob of artisans belonging to those lesser guilds

May 3.
Great
victory at
Bevers-
houtsveld,

¹ *Chron. Com. Fland., Corp.* i. 240.

which were usually allied to the Leliaerts. Following them, two or three hundred knights galloped into the plain. The carefully-posted Gantois easily routed their assailants and entered the town.¹ With difficulty did the Count, after hair-breadth escapes, reach a place of safety. The fight went on for some time in the streets, but the weavers and fullers joined the assailants, and the men of Ghent were soon in possession of the town. It was against the lesser crafts and the rich burghers that their vengeance was directed: "they entered the districts where the richer citizens dwelt, whom they ill treated and spoilt;" before leaving they took hostages from the more important magnates. Many fishmongers and butchers, members of guilds which had shown themselves particularly hostile to the weavers and their allies of Ghent, were executed.² But in three days order was restored, and the Gantois departed, leaving in command of a garrison Van den Bossche and Pierre de Wintere, of whom the latter had been exiled from Bruges some years before, and had since become échevin of Ghent.

and
occupation
of Bruges.

¹ Cf. Gilliodts, *Invent. Brug.* ii. 415.

² *Chron. Com. Fl. u.s.* Cf. Meyer, *s.a.*

Philip's first care was to send home provisions from the granaries of Damme and Sluys. Ypres, Courtray and the other towns, at once declared for the popular cause: only Audenarde, as once before, and Termonde remained true to the Count. Within Audenarde had gathered such of the Leliaert knights as had escaped from Bevershoutsveld. Artevelde at once determined to attack them. But it was no longer against the Count alone that the artisans had to fight; the Duke of Burgundy, his son-in-law, had persuaded the young King of France to put down the rebellion by armed intervention. It is almost a commonplace in history that the chief object of Charles VI.'s invasion of Flanders was, by winning a great victory over the artisans, to strike terror into the Parisians, who had recently refused to pay certain impositions, and had been imitated by the great towns of the north. The condign vengeance which the king's uncles took upon the Parisians on their return in triumph is equally well known. Here, however, we have only to do with Flanders. Some time must elapse before an army could be brought together; to prevent the capture of Audenarde in the meantime it was deemed

Second
siege of
Auden-
arde.

Interven-
tion of the
King of
France.

Useless
negotia-
tions.

advisable to open negotiations. Three French bishops were despatched to Tournay, from which place they wrote to Artevelde for safe-conducts. In a letter dated October 10th, Artevelde replied that he would send safe-conducts only on condition that all "the fortresses and towns that are shut or closed against the Gantois should be opened;"¹ when the ambassadors renewed their application, he begged them to abandon such vain negotiations, if they had no authority to grant these terms: "it seems to us that you may believe that we will keep our word as well as the great lords do, although we are weak and poor."

Secret
overtures
to Richard
II.

Philip van Artevelde had already made overtures to Richard II. During the months of August, September, and October, several échevins of Ghent were sent over to "the King of *France* and England."²

¹ *Chron. S. Denis*, quoted Lett. *Hist.* iii. 498.

² *V.* text of instructions in Notes, Lett. *Froiss.* x. 464, and *lettres de créance*, *ib.* [475]. It is extremely unlikely that after on the 14th the title "King of France" had been given to Richard, on the 20th it should be given to Charles. It is therefore probable that the letter of that date given by Froissart (x. 93) is either incorrect or not genuine. Moreover it gives the title "Regard," *i.e.* Rewaert, of *Flanders* to Artevelde, for which there is no evidence. He is occasionally styled Rewaert of *Ghent*. The title was common enough in the Flemish towns for the commander-in-chief.

They were commissioned to ask from Richard the confirmation of their liberties as King of France, the fixing of the staple in Flanders, the payment of the subsidy promised by Edward III., and assistance in defending their merchant shipping. There is also mention of the payment to Artevelde of certain arrears, probably of the pension granted in 1345 to Catherine van Artevelde and her children. Doubtless secret negotiations were on foot for the sending of military aid, but no details have been preserved. The suspicions of the French government find expression in a letter addressed on October 28 to the Bailli of Rouen. In this the king is made to describe the object of his expedition as "to break up the alliances which we have understood Philip van Artevelde and his friends have treated and spoken of with the English our enemies, and to prevent the great damage which would come of it to us and our subjects."¹

By the beginning of November, Charles VI. had brought together a great army at Arras. On the news of the approaching danger, Artevelde had visited all the towns to inspire the citizens with

French
Invasion.

¹ Notes, Lett. *Froiss.* x. 467.

Nov. 20.
Passage
of the Lys
at Com-
mines.

confidence, and had caused the bridges over the Lys to be broken down. At Commines was posted Pierre van den Bossche with a considerable force to prevent the passage of the French. When the invading army arrived before that place, they found the bridge broken down, and the opposite bank strongly guarded. The leaders, therefore, determined to march up the stream in the hope of finding a bridge or ford. But a handful of adventurous knights ventured in spite of orders to cross the Lys a little higher up, in a few boats they chanced to find, and while these diverted the attention of the Flemings, the French engineers succeeded in restoring a passage over the bridge. Thus attacked on both sides, the Flemings were routed, and their leader wounded.

The effects of this first disaster were at once seen. Ypres surrendered, and its example was followed by Cassel, Bergues, and most of the towns of Western Flanders; in all cases they surrendered to the Count's vengeance their captains,—men who had probably been appointed by Artevelde.

The Chief Captain of Ghent had at once raised the siege of Audenarde on hearing of the disaster at

Commines, had hastened to Ghent and then, at the head of the militia of the towns still unconquered, had on Nov. 25, taken up his position at Roosebeke, a place admirably chosen to defend both Ghent and Bruges. Two days later the battle was fought : the Flemings were soon thrown into confusion, and in their panic-stricken flight their leader perished, trodden down by the feet of his men.

Nov. 27.
Roose-
beke.
Death of
Artevelde.

Soon all Flanders save Ghent was obedient to the Count and his lord. It was fortunate now for Ghent that the county, chiefly from opposition to France, had adopted the cause of Urban VI. in opposition to Clement VII. Next year Spencer, Bishop of Norwich, led a crusade of Urbanists to Flanders against the Clementines. The aid thus given, though insufficient to prevent the ultimate submission of Ghent, enabled it to stand out for more than a year, and at last to gain tolerably favourable terms. But shortly afterwards Louis de Male died, the Valois Duke of Burgundy succeeded, and a new period in Flemish history began.

It remains to say somewhat of the constitutional aspects of the time of Philip van Artevelde.

Constitu-
tional
changes.

We have already traced the development of the

system of the Members of Flanders to the time of the elder Artevelde. The Franc of Bruges had in 1310 been associated with the three towns, but never again appears definitely as a Member till 1356. The significance of this it is not difficult to see. The suppression of the agrarian rising of 1324 had made the Franc wholly feudal in feeling;¹ and if it were put on equality with the three towns, it would be able to impede their free development. Philip van Artevelde restored the preponderance of the three towns;² it was with them that the representatives of the Hanseatic League negotiated during the years 1381-2, and in their reports they never refer to the Franc as sharing in the government of the county.³ But it reappears as a Member at the Peace of Tournay in 1385, and from that time it becomes definitely one of the "IV. Leden," a term which first appears in 1399.⁴ The Count's policy was to maintain the Franc in this position as a counterpoise to the communal element. The importance of the change was incalculable. Instead of an

1356. The Franc becomes one of the Members of Flanders as a balance to the towns.

Deprived of this character during the rule of Philip van Artevelde.

1385. Its reappearance as a Member.

Importance of this.

¹ In the sixteenth century there were in the Franc ten lords possessing "haute justice," twenty-six "moyenne" or "basse," and sixty-seven with seignorial courts. Gilliodts, *Invent. Brug.* iv. 302.

² *Ib.* 307.

³ *Ib.* 309.

⁴ *Ib.* 313-5.

assembly of town deputies, arose a meeting of Estates, divided into the three orders, the clergy, the noblesse and the *tiers état*. The centralising strength of the Valois dukes came only just in time to prevent Flanders becoming a confederation of independent republics.

Within Ghent itself a fairly satisfactory arrangement had been arrived at. From 1380 the "deke van de poorters" again appears in the town account-books. The fullers are still excluded: the Three Members therefore are henceforth the Poorters, the Weavers, and the Small Crafts.¹ A perfect arrangement was not feasible, and the system actually adopted seems to have worked well. At any rate the Leliaert section of the poorters is manifestly weaker in the time of Philip than in that of his father; for more than four years the great majority of the citizens of all classes were united in the struggle to maintain their liberties. It is noticeable that the arrangement of Members of the town in the time of Philip is that ascribed by L'Espinoy and others to James. The intervening years were

Organisa-
tion of
Ghent.
1380.

Reappear-
ance of the
Dean of
the
Poorterie,
with whom
are
associated
the Deans
of the
Weavers
and Small
Crafts.

¹ Vanderk. *Siccle*, 173. *Comptes* of 1380. "Deke van de poorters . . . deke van de neringhen . . . deke van de weverie."

easily forgotten and the organisation connected with the name of Artevelde was ascribed to him who had made most impression on the popular mind.

Increasing
centralisa-
tion in the
adminis-
tration of
the county.

While the towns had to deal with princes ruling over small territories, local liberties and privileges might be maintained. But when a considerable aggregation of principalities had taken place, the prince was able to use against one of his provinces the money and men of all the others. The towns of Flanders stood therefore in a very different relation towards the Counts of the House of Valois from that towards its predecessors. How far the county was from being united within itself the preceding narrative has shown. The Count could quite easily in the future play off the rural noblesse against the towns, the civic magnates against the artisans, the small towns against the great. No longer could it be hoped that a confederation of towns would govern the county: Ghent and Bruges must henceforth be content with *municipal* liberties. They could not even retain their previous powers of self-government: the citizens of Courtray were forbidden after the battle of Roosebeke to vote taxes save with

the consent of the prince ;¹ from 1399 the échevins of Bruges were deprived of the right of nominating the councillors, and the captains of the town militia were from this time appointed by the Count.²

As the princes became stronger they naturally followed the example of the French kings and the work of centralisation began. This was first seen in the administration of justice. Louis de Crecy had endeavoured with little success to subject the sentences of local échevinages to the revision of his Council. Louis de Male succeeded in establishing in 1367 a court of appeal, the *Audience of the Count*, a Committee or offshoot of the Council ; and in 1373 a *Sovereign Bailli of Flanders* was appointed with supreme criminal jurisdiction. These institutions were developed and strengthened by Philippe le Hardi, from whose reign dates the *Council of Flanders* in its later form.³ As this is comparable to the Parliament of Paris in its origin and functions, so the *Chambre des Comptes*, the development of a Committee of the Council known earlier as the *Cour des renenghes*, resembled the like-named

Creation
of a
Sovereign
Bailli,

and the
Council of
Flanders.

¹ Vanderk. *Sizle*, 275.

² *Ib.* 276.

³ *Ib.* 282.

court at the French capital. The financial work of the Count's ministers was no longer merely the superintendence of the domain and the receipt of customary rents, but now included the collection and management of aids and imposts.¹ Thus an elaborate administrative system gradually arose which exercised an increasing control over the towns, and more and more lessened their independence.

Results
of the
period.

What then were the permanent gains resulting from the artisan movement? It has only been with great reluctance that the term "oligarchy" has throughout been applied to the ruling class; unfortunately there is no other English word to express the rule of the few over the many. Their position was the result of the past history, and we can only blame them for clinging to it when it had become untenable. It is quite certain, however, that if they had succeeded in repressing the craftsmen they would have become a caste, and, as in all caste-ruled countries, civilisation would have become stationary. That the western world was saved from such a fate is owing to the struggles of the "vulgar mechanics."

¹ Vanderk. *Sixle*, 285.

But their work was positive as well as negative. The word "citizen," *bourgeois*, *poorter*, had meant one of a small class of privileged persons ; all other dwellers in the town were there on sufferance. It was now applied to all the inhabitants ; the privileges of the few had become the rights of all. Thus within the towns there was a large population of persons equal before the law. From the towns the idea of legal equality spread over the country, and by the abolition in modern times of the privileges of nobles and the disabilities of peasants, all men have become members of that citizen class.¹ Every age has its own task. It was the work of the age of the Artevelde to begin the struggle for legal equality ; it is the work of our own to make that equality real.

The two Artevelde are important not as the founders of institutions, but as representative men of their country and period. The task of the first was the more difficult, and the time of his activity longer. Under him the Flemish towns endeavoured to take up a position of neutrality,—no prophetic anticipation of the modern neutrality of Belgium,

Conclu-
sion.

¹ Cf. Maurer, *Städteverf.* ii. 744-5.

as some have thought,—but a compromise between their feudal duties and their economic necessities. Unable to maintain this position they joined the English alliance. Artevelde indeed would have gone further; and though the Prince of Wales project would have been in many respects by no means satisfactory, especially for England, yet for Flanders the rule of the English kings could scarcely have been worse than the Valois, Spanish, and Austrian despotism. But in future it will be James van Artevelde's chief claim to recollection that under him the artisans in Flanders gained their first great victory in the struggle for political rights. That victory was not permanent; nor, when an ultimate settlement was attained,—for everywhere the craftsmen gained *some* share in self-government,—did it take the exact shape he contemplated. But the importance of his action is not thereby diminished; and that he carried through the change with so little violence justifies us in judging his conduct wise and firm.

The social struggle is scarcely less prominent in the time of his son, but it is not complicated by the Anglo-French war. The contest between the Gantois

and their Count does almost, in the way in which it is usually told, appear causeless and resultless. But it is not so. The liberties he was defending were now no longer those of a small class, but of all the inhabitants of Ghent; and in the struggle of Philip and his predecessors in the office of Captain against Louis de Male they were everywhere hailed as allies by the artisans of other towns who had not yet gained political rights. He fell before brute force; but his work was permanent. And, finally, it repays even so tedious an investigation as this is likely to seem, to find that the history of the Flemish towns in the fourteenth century is the record, not of jealous and meaningless squabbles, and of the uproars of the "residuum," but of an intelligible advance in the world's order.

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